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INDIGENISTA HEROES AND *FEMMES FATALES*: MYTH-MAKING IN LATIN
AMERICAN LITERATURE AND FILM

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By

Megan Ann O'Neil

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Enrico Mario Santí, Professor of Hispanic Studies

Lexington, Kentucky

2016

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

INDIGENISTA HEROES AND *FEMMES FATALES*: MYTH-MAKING IN LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND FILM

This dissertation explores myth-making in Latin America by focusing specifically upon four Amerindian and *mestizo* figures: Doña Bárbara, *mestiza* protagonist of Rómulo Gallegos' 1929 novel; Anacaona and Hatuey, Taíno *caciques* who first appeared in Bartolomé de las Casas' *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552); and Andrés Chilibiquinga, indigenous protagonist of Jorge Icaza's *Huasipungo* (1934). The present analysis examines the evolution of these myths from their original appearance to literary and film versions throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries in the Caribbean and Andean regions. The project focuses upon the ways in which artists have interpreted these myths, their embedding in society's collective memory, and their mythical functions in anti- and postcolonial discourse. By breaking down each myth into its most basic structure, this project identifies the core connotations contained within that reveal each myth's function as a cultural foundation in Latin America. It also examines how the versions of a myth depart from one another, thus underscoring possible critiques of the myth. Finally, it examines the ways in which some of these myths have become commodities, particularly in contemporary popular culture. By examining these figures as cultural myths—bridging past and present—, this research argues that a mythic-interpretive model proves effective as it leads us to a deeper understanding of the universal connotations contained not only within the stories chosen here, but the Latin American narrative as a whole.

KEYWORDS: Myth, Postcolonial, Positivism, *Indigenismo*, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes

Megan A. O'Neil

April 25, 2016

Date

INDIGENISTA HEROES AND *FEMMES FATALES*: MYTH-MAKING IN LATIN
AMERICAN LITERATURE AND FILM

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Chapter One

Introduction: Myth, Culture and Community

This dissertation examines the function of myth and its foundational link to Latin American culture. While this study does not limit itself to one specific time period or region, it focuses primarily upon four Caribbean and Andean myths that were pivotal to 19th-century nationalist campaigns and 20th- and 21st-century postcolonial movements: Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga. In recent years, these figures have been the subject of many literary and visual representations, yet their contemporary presence is not unique. Since their respective original appearances in Rómulo Gallegos' *Doña Bárbara* (1929), Bartolomé de las Casas' *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552), and Jorge Icaza's *Huasiungo* (1934), numerous versions have recreated these narratives. As a result, these myths have become embedded into the collective psyche, as foundations of cultural heritage. This dissertation explores *why* and *how* these cultural myths have become preserved in collective memory, their sociopolitical function, and, in some cases, their conversion into commodities.

While numerous studies have interpreted the texts mentioned, these four figures have never been examined as myth. This dissertation, therefore, intends to offer a new interpretation of Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga by examining them through a mythical-interpretive framework. Given that myth is the oldest narrative, the unique relationship between myth and literature is pertinent to this study. As Michael Palencia-Roth has noted, myth “arises from the deepest recesses of men’s minds” to explain truth (15). It spreads by literature and oral tradition until it integrates into the collective psyche. As anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) famously stated,

“myth *is* language: to be known, myth has to be told; it is a part of human speech” (“The Structural Study of Myth” 430). In Latin America, myth became most prevalent in the 19th and 20th centuries. European positivist thought—which stressed *logos*: science, reason, and the secularization of mythic thought—flourished among Latin American intellectual circles. Influenced by this ideology, élite campaigns for progress sought to redefine national images by suppressing indigenous heritage. In the process of (re)writing history and encouraging the Amerindian population to embrace the modern age, Latin American nations suffered from political despotism and social conflicts. Indeed, importation of European ideas and their application without the necessary adaptation to local culture often projected a false image which contributed to the formation of what can only be described as imperfectly modern societies. Artists responded to these problems through myth, underscoring Latin America’s unique history and culture, which differentiated them from Europe and the U.S.

But just how did artists examine myth? Palencia-Roth has described the process: “[h]aving inherited the mythical worldview of his culture, whether consciously acknowledged or not, a writer approaches myth largely in one of three ways: he can try to create it, to destroy it, or to recreate it” (17). And yet, he also has noted that despite its numerous types—creation, destruction, destiny, rebirth—one defining characteristic of myth is that it expresses a “transcendental reality too large to be expressed” (15). For this reason, there is no absolute myth; rather, as Lévi-Strauss emphasized in his structural approach, each version of a myth adds another piece to its puzzle and one must collect all the pieces in order to view a myth in its totality. Only then can one identify the basic, core elements of a myth—what Lévi-Strauss referred to as “mythemes.” While this

dissertation does not conduct a structural analysis of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, it does implement Lévi-Strauss' concept of mythemes in order to examine the core connotation of each myth. Numerous versions—ranging from colonial to contemporary—are examined, and given that several of these works are non-canonical, this dissertation also intends to draw focus upon them.

While all versions of a myth share a common narrative structure, one of the tasks when conducting a mythic interpretation becomes identifying *where* one version departs from the next and, more precisely, *why* its author has chosen to do so. In taking this approach to myth analysis—detecting consistent mythemes versus varying aspects—one arrives at a deeper understanding of the myth. Furthermore, and the focus of this dissertation, one also begins to explore *why* a particular myth has perpetuated within a given culture. While myth has no beginning, it is the cultural foundation of a community—an anchor. Indeed, myth is indissociable from community: “Myth arises only from a community and for it: they engender one another, infinitely and immediately” (Nancy 50). The perpetuation of a particular myth within a given culture informs its foundational nature. Keeping this in mind, the present study attempts to identify core connotations within the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths that underscore this foundational link to Latin American culture.

Another pertinent aspect of this investigation is the undeniable link between myth and history. The (re)emergence of a myth is often tied to a specific historical event—each version of the narrative reflecting popular sentiment. This dissertation, therefore, focuses upon the historical context of each version of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths in order to identify what prompted its creation. This aspect,

however, becomes a backdrop for the interpretation. Myth analysis must ultimately move beyond history because the relationship between the two is not symbiotic. As Karen Armstrong notes: "...we have created myths about our forefathers that are not historical but help to explain current attitudes about our environment, neighbours and customs" (*A Short History* 6).¹ As a result, myth is not stagnant. It surpasses history because it contains universal connotations that defy temporal and geographic restrictions. Because myth is the very foundation of culture and community, its connotations are imbedded within the collective psyche. As this dissertation reveals, each version of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquing myths are associated with specific historical moments, yet history does not define them. In fact, it has the opposite effect: as the foundation, myth defines history. In other words, artists are led to interpret historical events through myth precisely because of the mythic connotations already embedded within culture and, subsequently, within their psyche. While communities evolve over time, myths are the building blocks from which culture is constructed. Over time, the connotation of a myth, therefore, can become an ideology. This is particularly evident in the present study, as we see the civilization/barbarity debate take center stage in all four of the myths discussed. As Bruce Lincoln has described it, myth is "an ideology in narrative form" (*Theorizing Myth* 207) and Maurice Leenhardt adds that, "It is the speech, the figure, the act that circumscribes the event at the heart of man, emotive like an infant, before it is a fixed narrative" (qtd. in Nancy 49). Myths recur because they have converted into an ideology integrated into the collective psyche and, as this dissertation suggests, they become an important device in collective memory. As we see

¹ As Armstrong adds: "...mythology is an art form that points beyond history to what is timeless in human existence, helping us to get beyond the chaotic flux of random events, and glimpse the core of reality" (*A Short History* 7).

in the case of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, for example, positivist projects for modernity that sought to suppress the autochthonous in favor of progress threatened to erase Latin American indigenous heritage and, as a result, artists combatted this through myth in order to preserve these narratives.

According to Maurice Halbwachs, society pressures people to remember, and their collective memory is, in essence, a reconstruction of the past through the lens of the present. This can, however, lead to an alteration of history: “Society from time to time obligates people not just to reproduce in thought previous events of their lives, but also to touch them up, to shorten them, or to complete them so that, however convinced we are that our memories are exact, we give them a prestige that reality did not possess” (51). For this reason, the collective memory of any culture is inevitably (re)shaped and (re)interpreted according to present circumstances. The collective memory is inherently the national memory of an “imagined community,” in which, according to Benedict Anderson, it is a socially constructed community imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group.² This dissertation applies Halbwachs’ and Anderson’s notion of collective national memory and community to the recollection of myth. As Karen Armstrong notes, myth:

was regarded as primary, it was concerned with what was thought to be timeless and constant in our existence. Myth looked back to the origins of life, to the foundations of culture, to the deepest levels of the human mind. Myth was not concerned with practical matters, but with meaning...the *mythos* of a society provided people with a context that made sense of

² As Anderson noted, “It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (his emphasis, 6).

their day-to-day lives; it directed their attention to the eternal and the universal. (*The Battle for God* xiii)

As Mark Schorer defines it: “Myths are the instruments by which we continually struggle to make our experience intelligible to ourselves. A myth is a large, controlling image that gives philosophical meaning to the facts of ordinary life; that is, which has organizing value for experience” (355). Indeed, myth, like history, is both eternal and present. In other words, it expresses something beyond human understanding (eternal) and yet at the same time shapes our understanding of the human experience (present). As shown in the present study, each version of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquing myths inevitably (re)interprets the myth through a contemporary lens. To add to this, one must also recognize the influence of each version’s author for, as Geoffrey S. Kirk has noted, “myths can possess significance through their structure, which may unconsciously represent structural elements in the society from which they originate or the typical behaviouristic attitudes of the myth-makers themselves” (252). One well-known example in Hispanic literature is the Don Juan myth. Don Juan was a legendary trickster and womanizer known throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Tirso de Molina’s (1579-1648) *El burlador de Sevilla* (presented from 1612 to 25) is the first written account of the libertine. In Tirso’s interpretation of this myth, Don Juan suffers for his sins, which include, among others, deceitful language and womanizing. This version of the Don Juan myth is a reflection of Medieval Spain and, thus, the trickster is subjected to an eternity in Hell—the ultimate punishment for his acts against Catholicism. In José Zorrilla’s (1817-93) *Don Juan Tenorio* (1844), however, the myth reappears with a much more remorseful Don Juan than its predecessor. In fact, the

trickster ultimately repents for his sins and goes to Heaven. Like Tirso's version, Zorilla's is a reflection of Enlightenment Spain and the author's own conservatism and Catholic faith.

While myth is (re)interpreted according to the *zeitgeist*, the mythemes present in each version of a myth underscore its core connotation. Calling upon Lévi-Strauss' approach, therefore, becomes pertinent in order to understand how differing versions, when combined, can reveal the core connotation of a myth. In the case of Don Juan, the common mythemes are: 1) Don Juan is a trickster, and 2) his actions determine his destiny. Both Tirso's and Zorilla's versions differ in their interpretation of the myth's ending, perhaps because they were both dissatisfied with this aspect and, thus, sought to reconcile it. This, too, becomes an important aspect of myth analysis. While each version of a myth adds another piece to its puzzle, thus expanding its interpretation, it can also "speak" to previous versions, identifying possible pitfalls and reconciling them.

And yet, simply identifying mythemes is not sufficient. Breaking them down even further reveals that the Don Juan myth contains a sub-mytheme: (wo)man has free will. This notion becomes the core of the myth upon which the narrative is built. The different attitudes of Don Juan and the distinct endings to his story are merely differing interpretations of this sub-mytheme. This core connotation embedded within the myth reflects a foundation of Spanish culture. Given the religious overtones of the narrative, this connotation also becomes a base for Christian ideology—a fundamental element of Spanish history—and embedded into the collective psyche. Because the Don Juan myth embodies a connotation so integral to Spanish culture, artists continue to recall it centuries later. As displayed in the present study, the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey,

and Andrés Chilibringa myths play an identical role in the formation of Latin American culture and can be broken down and examined in much the same manner.

One final element that this dissertation examines is how myth becomes converted into a commodity, as suggested by Roland Barthes (1915-80) in his *Mythologies* (1984). Here he departs from defining myth as a narrative and states it as a system of communication, a phenomenon of everyday life defined by the way it is expressed. Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857-1913) notion of the *sign* as a union of the *signified*—a concept—and the *signifier*—the symbol used to express that concept laid the foundations of 20th-century semiotic studies. Barthes recognized myth as a second-order semiotic system in which a sign in the first system (a determined concept or image) becomes a mere signifier in the second system. As a result, myth permeates all objects of daily culture, its message “seizing on a certain sign for its own ends while sheltering behind the initial literal significance of the sign,” thus resulting in a “theft of language” (Moriarty 24). Barthes believed that anything could become a myth precisely because language has no confines: “Every object in the world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society, for there is no law, whether natural or not, which forbids talking about things” (109). To continue with our example, Don Juan is no longer a solely Spanish myth; rather, the term “Don Juan” nowadays is synonymous to “play boy.” Indeed, his story has become popular and well known among international audiences. It is said, for example, that Gaston Leroux based *The Phantom of the Opera* (1909-10) on this myth. This novel was later converted into Rupert Julian's 1925 film and Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1986 Broadway musical, further disseminating the narrative. Other versions include Jeremy Leven's 1994 film *Don Juan DeMarco* and

Joseph Gordon-Levitt's 2013 film *Don Jon*, all based upon this myth. Indeed, the prevalence of this narrative in popular culture recalls Barthes' notion that myth can become infused with certain cultural connotations that promote consumption in bourgeois capitalist society. The popularity of the Don Juan myth ensured its marketability and, as such, the decision to recreate his story relied, in part, on its ability to "sell." This phenomenon also occurs in the case of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, and Hatuey myths (Andrés Chilibiquinga is an exception) as they, too, become commodities, as displayed particularly by the contemporary versions.

By employing this interpretive framework to the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, this dissertation approaches each interpretation by: 1) examining each version of the narrative individually in order to identify its historical context and how its author interprets the myth; 2) viewing each myth in its totality by identifying common mythemes throughout each version; 3) breaking down the mythemes further in order to examine the sub-mythemes that underscore each myth's universal connotation(s); and 4) considering the conversion of each myth into a marketable commodity. In offering a unique mythic interpretation of these figures, the present study constructs a critical framework that can be helpful when interpreting other narratives, thus providing a different approach to examining Latin American culture.

Myth and the Anti- and Postcolonial Debates

The symbiotic relationship between myth and culture/community in Latin America is evident from pre-Columbian times. One who possesses "myth consciousness" is defined as living solely within the confines of a mythic world and "possesses no metaphysical or scientific constructs with which to compliment, augment or surpass

mythic understanding of his or her experience” (Calogero 91). Mythic consciousness was broken during what Eric Voegelin describes as the “Ecumenic Age,” or the “period of history when Asian, Near Eastern and European cultures [the Persian, Macedonian, and Roman empires, for example] suffered for the first time from the domination of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural empire”³ (Calogero 92). It is during these eras of new discoveries and conquests that civilizations reinterpreted their myths.⁴

The Spanish conquest of the New World was no different. When Cristóbal Colón set sail in August 1492, one important simultaneous event was occurring on the Iberian Peninsula: the Re-Conquest, in which the Catholic Monarchs re-conquered the Peninsula from the Moors in the name of religion—their purpose to prepare the world for the second coming of Jesus Christ. The discovery of the New World extended this religious quest to that part of the world, and the religious overtones of the Spanish Conquest created an apocalyptic and militaristic myth.

By the same token, the Amerindians were engrossed in their own mythologies. Most notably, the Aztecs worshipped the god Huitzilopochtli, the god of war, and the only way that they could preserve their rule was by conquering and sacrificing to this god. It is generally believed that the Aztecs had mythic consciousness; however, Miguel León Portilla’s research indicates that there was conscious differentiation. Before

³ As Calogero notes: “The Persian, Macedonian and Roman empires are the prime examples. However, Voegelin does not limit his scope of inquiry to this region. In addition to the empires listed above, Voegelin is especially interested in analogous events in China occurring at about the same time” (92-3).

⁴ Calogero explains this further: “In Voegelin’s view, it is during this era of empires that the discovery of transcendence and the differentiation of consciousness first occur. He argues that the crisis created by the destruction of smaller societies and their assimilation into larger, impersonal empires precipitated the need for this new and more profound religious understanding. Just as these large empires pushed back the boundaries of the known world and began to envision global domination, so did their victims begin to broaden the boundaries of their gods in the quest to find the meaning of their new situation. During this process, there was a trajectory of development from the local god to the one god of all nations that Moses, for example, encountered in the burning bush” (93).

building their empire, and the rise of the Triple Alliance, the Aztecs were a small group of warriors who arrived to the Valley of Mexico. Tlacaélel (1397-1487), the son of Emperor Huitzilihuitl and prince of Tenochtitlan, saw the importance of the Huitzilopochtli cult in order to convert the Aztecs into the powerful empire that, in 1519, Hernán Cortés would meet. Tlacaélel burned historical codices and “created an alternative history and mythology that marked the Aztecs as the direct recipients of the wisdom and cultural heritage of the earlier and now dispersed Toltec society” (Calogero 52). Huitzilopochtli, therefore, became the dominant god, and was a justification for the Aztec conquest of other tribes and human sacrifices. This myth was also apocalyptic, and tied to ritual: without the offering of human blood, the Aztec Age would come to an end.

The Spaniards and Aztecs both understood that their position of dominance had the ability to shape History, and when the Spaniards arrived to Tenochtitlan, there was a clash of myths. While the Spaniards believed they were completing history to pave the way for God’s return, the Aztecs believed that their human sacrifices to Huitzilopochtli were keeping their empire alive. Much like Tlacaélel had done to strengthen the Aztec Empire, Spain essentially sought to replace one myth with another, in order to reshape History for future generations. For this reason, the Spaniards burned many of the codices and built directly upon the ruins of pre-Columbian sites across Latin America. These early myths, both Spanish and Amerindian, became an integral part of Latin American cultural heritage, embedded into its collective memory. This, however, became contested by Western modernity, beginning with its ideological influence upon 19th-century independence movements.

While there is no one definition of myth, much of the way it has been perceived in Latin America is a result of the historic debate between *mythos* and *logos*. The term “myth,” derived from the Greek *mythos*, has taken on a contemporary cultural denotation drastically different from its original. As Lincoln notes, today “...whenever someone calls something a ‘myth,’ powerful—and highly consequential—assertions are being made about its relative level of validity and authority vis-à-vis other sorts of discourse” (ix). While “myth” in its contemporary usage often synonymizes “fiction” or “lie,” Lincoln points out that connotations associated to this term do, indeed, range in sentiment: “[they] can be strongly positive (e.g. myth = ‘primordial truth’ or ‘sacred story’), strongly negative (myth = ‘lie’ or ‘obsolete worldview’), or something in between (as in the mildly indulgent view that myth = ‘pleasant diversion,’ ‘poetic fancy,’ or ‘story of children’)” (ix). The counterpart to *mythos* has always been *logos*—logic, reason—and, from 1500 on, has been used in reference to scientific and tangible evidence. Indeed, Western modernity “was the child of *logos*” (Armstrong *A Short History* 119) and it is during this time period that *logos* replaces *mythos* as the standard mode to express and understand the human experience.

Our modern and contemporary conceptions of *mythos* and *logos* are far from their original functions. Myth was the original speech and, as Jean-Luc Nancy has noted, “The Greek *mythos*—Homer’s *mythos*, that is, speech, spoken expression—becomes ‘myth’ when it takes on a whole series of values that amplify, fill, and ennoble this speech, giving it the dimensions of a narrative of origins and an explanation of destinies...” (48). In the epic, *mythos* denoted “the speech of the preeminent, above all poets and kings, a genre (like them) possessed of high authority, having the capacity to advance powerful

truth claims, and backed by physical force,” whereas *logos* actually referred to “not rational argumentation but rather shady speech acts: those of seduction, beguilement, and deception” (Lincoln x). During the Axial Age (800-200 B.C.E.), *logos* began to eclipse *mythos*. In fact, the Romans rejected the term *mythoi* and regarded these tales as *fabulae*, thereby diminishing the seriousness of their link to culture and language (Lincoln x). As such, philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle began using *logos* to examine their own myths. This continued through the Post-Axial Period (200 B.C.E.-1500), when pagan *mythos* became replaced by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim ones. Influenced by Plato and Aristotle, religious leaders began using *logos* to validate their core beliefs.⁵ The definitive shift in the *mythos/logos* paradigm occurred, however, during Western modernization (1500-1800) in which *logos* replaced *mythos* as the popular approach. The separation of science and “mythical thought” began in 17th- and 18th-century Europe. Scientists such as Francis Bacon (1561-1626), René Descartes (1596-1650), and Isaac Newton (1643-1727) sought to explain through scientific evidence what had originally been explained by human perception, or in other words, the cultural myths created to explain natural phenomena. As Lévi-Strauss described it, “science could only exist by turning its back on the world of the senses” (*Anthropology and Myth* 6) and, therefore, scientists had to strip myth of its cultural validity. Indeed, the connection between the mind and human experience is one that shaped cultures and their beliefs, yet science sought to reduce

⁵ As Karen Armstrong has noted: “When Plato and Aristotle were translated into Arabic during the eight and ninth centuries, some Muslims tried to make the religion of the Koran a religion of *logos*. They evolved ‘proofs’ for the existence of Allah, modeled on Aristotle’s demonstration of the First Cause. These Faylasufs, as they were called, wanted to purge Islam of what they regarded as primitive, mythical elements...the Faylasufs did some interesting work, together with the Jews in the Islamic empire who set about the task of rationalising the religion of the Bible...” (115-6).

human perception to the result of neurological synapses in the brain, an explanation that left no room for mythic thought.

Auguste Comte's (1798-1857) positivism was one of the largest proponents of the shift from *mythos* to *logos* or, from "primitive" to "rational thought." Comte perceived this shift as a natural evolution of science in his "law of three stages": 1) theological; 2) metaphysical; and 3) positive. In the first, theological stage, human existence was governed solely by a supreme, reigning god(s) (*mythos*). Here, natural phenomena were perceived as directly correlated to the god(s). Ancient Greeks believed, for example, that lightening was an expression of Zeus' anger. In the second, metaphysical phase, logical rationalism replaced the supreme god(s). Natural phenomena were perceived as following a scientific order from within, as opposed to being governed by a supernatural, divine force. Aristotle argued, for example, that the gods did not move the stars; rather, their inner nature was to move in a circular orbit. The final, positive stage departed completely from supernatural or innate explanations of natural phenomena as scientists focused solely upon discovering the correlation between cause and effect. This stage was governed exclusively by *logos*. Johannes Kepler achieved, for example, a "positive" understanding of planetary motion by developing a numerical relationship between a planet's distance from the sun and the duration of its orbit.

As 19th-century Latin American ruling élites focused on nationalist campaigns in these former colonies, positivist thought flourished among intellectual circles. This, coupled with Latin America's desire to compete on an economic scale with the United States and Europe, proved that a scientific approach to culture fit in with an elitist's vision of a progressive society in the former colonies. Like any imported theory,

positivism had to be adapted to the Latin American situation. The result was that there was no single positivist model that flourished throughout the continent. Rather, “Latin American positivism [was] not only different from the European, but it varie[d] from one country to another” (Ardao 515). This was due in part to the heterogeneity of positivism that spread across Europe (France, England, Germany, and Italy) and the fact that there was an overall lack of communication among Latin American nations. Nevertheless, there was general consensus that the ruling élites viewed indigenous and *mestizo* groups as roadblocks to progress. Positivism served as a justification of the persecution of these marginalized groups as they promoted economic development.

Although the positivist movement spread across Latin America, it was most prevalent in Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil. In Argentina, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), Juan Bautista Alberdi (1810-1884), and José Ingenieros (1877-1925) argued that only education, urbanization, and the immigration of white Europeans could move Latin America from barbarity to civilization. In Sarmiento’s seminal work *Facundo: Civilización y barbarie* (1845), he established the civilization/barbarity debate that would forever influence Latin American intellectuals. Indeed, as we see in the case of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, this debate becomes one of their core sub-mythemes. In his critique of Juan Manuel de Rosas’ (1793-1877) dictatorship, Sarmiento believed that the only way to overcome the “barbarity” that had infiltrated Argentine politics was to develop its urban centers—epicenters of civilization—by importing European ideas (and people). In Mexico, Presidents Benito Juárez (1806-1872) and Porfirio Díaz (1830-1915), along with their Minister of Education Gabino Barreda (1820-1881), promoted positivist thought. Justo

Sierra (1848-1912) even turned positivism into a political movement: the party of the Scientists. Brazil was the only country to promote Comte's "Religion of Humanity," and in 1897, the Templo da Humanidade in Rio de Janeiro opened its doors, which face towards its Mecca: Paris (Ardao 521). The influence of positivist thought can also be seen in the country's flag, which boasts the motto, "Ordem e progresso," and positivist thought even played a key role in the 1889 military coup that overthrew Dom Pedro II (1825-91).

In Latin America, the importation of discourse from the metropolis has been a historic process of simultaneous rejection and acceptance. Much of Western thought has in fact been assimilated into the continent's ideological framework (Comte, Marx, Freud, Ortega, etc.). Latin America has a polemical, tense relationship with the West and its intellectual legacy that goes back to its Discovery. The influx of theories and ideas from the European metropolis from the Renaissance (1500-1600), to the Enlightenment (1600-1700), to Modern and Postmodern theories (1800-2000) have solidified Latin America's continued existence on the periphery, yet Millington notes that, "merely importing ideas without local consensus is unlikely to produce positive results" (35). In the case of positivism, although many Latin American intellectuals embraced positivist thought, several attempted to "talk back" to the metropolis by rejecting the importation of its theories. José Martí (1853-95), for example, called upon Latin American nations to unite against the invasion of foreign influence, believing that instead of importing ideas from Europe and North America, Latin America needed to create its own ideologies.⁶ The influx of positivist thought posed a threat to indigenous heritage. Indeed, as we will see in

⁶ Brazilian critic Roberto Schwarz argues, however, that, "outright rejection of modes of thinking from outside Latin America is no real alternative to slavish imitation if it presupposes that there is an authentic Latin America waiting to be recovered" (Millington 43).

the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, these narratives were used precisely to contest this ideological imposition. This rejection, in large part, was the result of Latin America's polemical relationship with Spain, its former colonizer. Indeed, anti-colonialism, or the critique of the Conquest, began as early as in the Spanish colonies. Colonial chroniclers such as Bartolomé de las Casas, Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, and El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, among others, criticized the Spaniards for their harsh treatment of the Amerindian. In addition, the "Black Legend" that spread throughout Europe in the 16th-century added to the image of Spanish cruelty, and subsequently was also promoted by the equally ravenous British. Given the historical fight against the exploitation of the Amerindian, it is hardly a surprise, then, that the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths would also embody a similar critique.

A question, therefore, arises: because the versions of these myths (with one exception: Las Casas' chronicle⁷) emerged in former colonies, are they a postcolonial critique of Latin America? One important, current polemic in postcolonial studies is whether this theory, developed in Europe in order to explain the colonial effects on Asian and African subjects, can be applied to works, issues, and societies in Latin America. While the work of notable postcolonial theorists (Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi Bhabha) deals specifically with Asia and Africa, much debate has ensued about its potential application onto the Latin American context. The question thus arises that if postcolonial theory is only applicable to works and issues in Asia and Africa, is it then essentialist in its application? And if so, what exactly can be

⁷ Las Casas' text would be an example of anti-colonialism, precisely because it critiqued Spanish endeavors during the conquest and colonization.

made of postcolonial theory today? One inescapable fact is that this theory has been studied and restudied so much over the past decades that, as we saw when defining myth, identifying the term is a complex issue in itself. As Bart Moore-Gilbert has noted:

Such has been the elasticity of the concept “postcolonial” that in recent years some commentators have begun to express anxiety that there may be a danger of imploding as an analytic construct with any real cutting edge...the problem derives from the fact that the term has been so variously applied to such different kinds of historical moment, geographical region, cultural identities, political predicaments and affiliations, and reading practices. As a consequence, there has been increasingly heated, even bitter, contestation of the legitimacy of seeing certain regions, periods, socio- political formation and cultural practices as “genuinely” postcolonial. (qtd. in Punter, *Postcolonial* 4)

David Punter also adds to this anxiety when he states, “The fact is that the postcolonial, is, in cultural and political terms, a bitterly contested field. The question of whether you should even spell the word with or without a hyphen, and what the implications might be...” (*Postcolonial* 5). The reality is that postcolonial discourse has extended into almost all areas of study, much like feminist theory, and because post-colonialism has not been reduced to one field or region, this opens up the term to a slew of definitions. As Chris Tiffon and Alan Lawson note, for example,

“Post-colonialism,” as it is now used in various fields, de-scribes a remarkably heterogeneous set of subject positions, professional fields, and critical enterprises. It has been used as a critique of totalising forms of

Western historicism;...as the name for a condition of nativist longing in post-independence national groupings;...as the inevitable underside of a fractured and ambivalent discourse of Colonialist power;... (qtd. in Punter, *Postcolonial* 5)

In saying that we live in a “postcolonial age,” then, it is important first to identify the time period to which we are referring to, and even whether, in fact, we are referring to one set time period. On this very debate Punter remarks whether the “postcolonial age” refers to the world “*after the end of the colonies* (if they have ended),” or perhaps to the world “as it has been *since the beginning of colonisation*” (his emphasis, *Postcolonial* 5). To further complicate the matter, Millington considers what the prefix “post” in “postcolonial” actually refers to and notes that, “On the one hand, ‘postcolonial’ may designate temporal succession and, more positively, imply a break with the Colonial and the emergence of what is ‘not-Colonial’ or independent. On the other hand, ‘postcolonial’ may be taken to designate the aftermath of the Colonial and imply the continuity of its legacy” (29-30).

In an effort to stray away from a reductionist view of the postcolonial when applying it to Latin America, yet at the same time differentiate it from anti-colonialism (during the Spanish conquest and colonization), we will regard the term “postcolonial” as referring to the period since the Spanish colonies gained their independence (1800-). Because the prefix “post” highlights both a break from the colonial and its continuity, we shall, therefore, choose a holistic approach to the term postcolonial by accepting both connotations. Although in Latin America there was a political break with the metropolis, the effects of the colonial period continue to influence social and political structures.

Indeed, virtually all of Latin America, with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico, gained their independence from Spain and Portugal in the early 19th century. Independence did not, however, imply a clean break or separation. The newly independent countries found themselves still economically tied to the metropolis. Furthermore, the sociopolitical structures formed during the over three hundred years of colonial rule could not merely be erased overnight. As Millington notes, “The mere ejection of Spanish and Portuguese authority [did] not eliminate the structures of the Colonial presence” (30). Thus during the 19th and 20th centuries, Latin America entered into a new economic phase with the invasion of foreign capitalism, where “Great Britain and then the United States simply replaced Spain and Portugal in dominating the region economically, politically and culturally” (Millington 30). The fact remains that, despite the collective intent to form independent nations fit to exist on the same sphere as the U.S. and Europe, Latin American countries very much remained on the periphery.

Despite the polemical nature of implementing postcolonial theory outside of Asia and Africa, there are two important postcolonial components that have influenced Latin American myth, as we see in our examination of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga narratives: 1) the Amerindian subaltern; and 2) the perpetuation of colonial structures. To begin with, the civilization/barbarity debate was deeply rooted in colonialism. The Spanish Conquest and Colonization produced a traumatic experience for the indigenous population, in which this group was immediately marginalized. The arrival of the Spanish *conquistadors* at the end of the 15th century produced a colonial racism and Eurocentric construction of Amerindian identity that is evident throughout colonial chronicles. Perhaps one of the strongest advocates against the Amerindians was

Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1489-1573), who believed that their barbaric, idol-worshipping nature warranted Spain's "just war" against the indigenous population. There also emerged advocates against the cruel treatment of the Amerindian, including Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566), for example, whose classic *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552) defended the rights of the indigenous population. This racism towards the Amerindian, however, became deeply rooted within society, and the Eurocentric construction of indigenous "barbarity" continued to perpetuate after the colonial period. As a result, the Amerindian was and continues to occupy a subaltern space, as defined by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Denied access to any hegemonic discourse, the indigenous population remains in this peripheral, marginalized space where, as Spivak explained, they are "spoken for."

Related directly to the Amerindian's subalterneity is the fact that colonial structures have perpetuated in former colonies, particularly in countries with large indigenous populations. In the political sector, the hope of newly independent nations to break free from Spanish imperialism was quickly diminished as strings of dictators assumed power. To add to this, *caudillismo* also flourished, especially in the rural regions, which fueled political corruption throughout the continent. The social structure, too, was a perpetuation of colonialism. White élites, with ties to Europe, controlled politics as the indigenous and *mestizo* populations remained marginalized, the latter only gaining upward social mobility during the 1920s and 30s. In the economic sector, the colonial *encomienda* system, in which Amerindians worked for the *encomendero* and, in return, received protection and religious instruction, was replaced by *gamonalismo*. José Carlos Mariátegui's (1894-1930) influential essay *Siete ensayos sobre la realidad*

peruana (1928) employs Marxist theories to express a preoccupation with the uneven benefits of industrialization. As Latin American leaders encouraged foreign investment and ownership, any profits left over went to ruling élites, leaving the large indigenous population without any substantial compensation for their work.

While some of these issues were addressed during the 20th and 21st centuries (*gamonalismo* was banned, for example), Latin American nations today continue to see political and social remnants from their colonial past. Indeed, the current *neoindigenista* movement—a continued effort to end Amerindian subalterneity—only emphasizes the fact that Latin America is, indeed, in a postcolonial phase. This explains why the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths remain relevant among contemporary audiences, as we will see in their most recent respective versions:

Telemundo's forthcoming *Doña Bárbara* (2016-); Edwidge Danticat's *Anacaona: Golden Flower, Haiti, 1490* (2005); Iciar Bollain's *También la lluvia* (2010); and Carlos Arcos Cabrera's *Memorias de Andrés Chilibiquinga* (2011). As revealed in this dissertation, much of the anti- and postcolonial sentiments contained within Latin American myth originated in *indianismo* and *indigenismo*, two literary currents that focused upon preserving Amerindian heritage, which were influenced by the rise of anthropology.

Myth and Anthropology: *Indianismo* and *Indigenismo*

As the Social Sciences gained recognition in the scientific field around the mid-19th century, cultural studies became the foreground for demonstrating positivist evolution from a “primitive,” theological state (governed by *mythos*) to a progressed one (governed by *logos*). Anthropologists and ethnologists Andrew Lang (1844-1912), James

George Frazer (1854-1941), and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857-1939), among others, demonstrated how the *mythos/logos* dichotomy defined the colonizers' superior position vis-à-vis the colonized: the colonizers' reliance on science (*logos*) was the result of their cultural evolution from the "primitive" stage of the colonized, who were governed by the divine (*mythos*). However, Lévi-Strauss' structural approach to "primitive" myth revealed something quite different: "the savage mind was hardly inferior to the technological rationality of the modern West" (Lincoln 210). Indeed, Lévi-Strauss' structural approach sought to uncover the universal symbols imbedded inside myths across varying cultures. In his own words, he sought to "reduce apparently arbitrary data to some kind of order, and to attain a level at which a kind of necessity becomes apparent, underlying the illusions of liberty" (*The Raw and the Cooked* 10). As such, his studies revealed that "mythical thought always progresses from the awareness of oppositions toward their resolution" and each myth consists of two opposing forces that are resolved through elements that mediate the resolution (*Structural Anthropology* 224). By way of a structural analysis of myth, he noted further that it is "possible to organize all the known variants of a myth into a set...[and] has the advantage of bringing some kind of order to what was previously chaos; it also enables us to perceive some basic logical processes which are at the root of mythical thought" (*Structural Anthropology* 223-4). Myth was not merely a result of "primitive" thought. Indeed, broken down into its most basic mythemes, a myth, much like science, not only expressed a logical sequence, but a universal cultural symbol found across temporal and geographic spaces. As such, Lévi-Strauss spent his career exploring the symbiotic link between myth and culture. Given that myth is a natural part of society's evolution and is strongly rooted in

our understanding of history and the past, it has been argued that positivists such as Comte created their own mythical dimension to positivism in deifying science and the notion of progress (Calogero 101-2).

As positivist thought became popular in 19th-century Latin America, artists turned towards anthropology as a reaction to this movement. Romantic thinkers were particularly influential during this time period, and the Amerindian became an important subject. Referred to as *indianismo*—which represented the Amerindian as folkloric and picturesque, subjected to ethnic, social, and class marginalization—this literature actually began in colonial chronicles and recurred up through the 20th century. As Julio Rodríguez Luis notes, “Es el ‘indio’, en lugar del indígena, el objeto de la literatura indianista que en la segunda mitad del XIX idealiza al ‘buen salvaje’ americano como parte del proyecto romántico de definir nuestra especificidad frente a Europa, pero principalmente para compensar así la opresión que el indígena venía sufriendo desde la Conquista” (“El indigenismo” 41). *Indianista* texts by 19th-century Cuban *Siboneístas*, and Andean authors such as Clorinda Matto de Turner (1852-1909), Juan León Mera (1832-94), and Jorge Isaacs (1837-95), were particularly influential.

The counterpart to this movement (and one of the stronger components of the anti-positivist movement) was *indigenismo*, which emerged in the 1920s and reached its peak in the Andean region during the 1930s and 40s. Aware of the colonial perception of the indigenous population, this movement intended to break with the stereotypical view of the Amerindian that stemmed from the Colonial period and perpetuated in *indianista* works. *Indigenistas* (Jorge Icaza, Ciro Alegría, José María Arguedas, among others) sought to create realistic accounts of the Amerindian, representing the indigenous subject

from an objective perspective, and used indigenous marginality in order to analyze the current problems in their country's respective society. According to Ángel Rama, there was great potential for this literature, which had an archeological prospective, so to speak, that is, the ability to preserve the indigenous culture that would have disappeared otherwise. Rama states, "In a way, [*indigenista* literature and art] were evidence for the past that had been retained by the lower strata, helping them to cohere socially and elaborate their own worldview, indispensable to the continued existence of a human group" (95).

Indigenismo was greatly influenced by the emergence of anthropology and archaeology in the social science sphere, as seen in their focus upon Latin America's pre-Columbian and colonial heritage. One of the features of this literature is that it implemented a critical analysis of the continent's social and political issues by applying sociology and anthropology to indigenous situations that critiqued Latin America's increasingly unbalanced move towards capitalism. Roberto González Echevarría notes that after World War I (1914-19) there was a subsequent "tearing down [of] the ideological certainties of the West" (149). In Latin America this was most notable in the decline of positivism, which essentially "removed natural science as the mediating discourse" and anthropology became an "antirevolutionary reaction" and a "general revolt against Positivism" (150). According to González Echevarría, this sentiment reflected the belief that European culture was no longer the goal of evolution, rather, Latin American intellectuals could look to pre-Columbian civilizations in order to reinterpret the history of the continent: "What the new discourse seeks is not so much knowledge about the Other as much as knowledge about the Other's

knowledge...Anthropology...offered those countries the possibility of claiming an origin different from the west...[and] could correct the errors of the conquest, atone for the crimes of the past, and make for a new history” (150). *Indigenistas* sought, in addition, to project important economic issues onto a political plane, in search of social and political vindication for the indigenous populations. Their works presented situations where the Amerindian population was exploited by the white élite for economic gain, thereby drawing attention to colonial structures that continued to exist and exploit indigenous populations.

Despite its differences to *indianismo*, *indigenistas*, too, looked towards indigenous myth in order to preserve culture. These works were overwhelmingly popular and left an imprint on Latin American culture. Indeed, many texts from both movements became what Doris Sommer has called “foundational fictions,” a term that underscores their functions as myth. Given that anti- and postcolonial sentiments and the civilization/barbarity debate are prominent aspects of Latin American culture, it is hardly a surprise, then, that they become core connotations of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Bello myths.

This dissertation examines each myth separately, employing the same interpretive framework, before focusing upon the core connotations found in all four myths. Chapter Two focuses upon Doña Bárbara, who is considered one of the most influential female protagonists in Latin America. The chapter begins by examining Gallegos’ novel, along with its precursor *La Coronela* (1928), in which the author contemplates the civilization/barbarity binary under Venezuelan Dictator Juan Vicente Gómez (1857-1935). This seminal work, much like Sarmiento’s *Facundo*, became a national novel, and

the civilization/barbarity debate a foundation of Venezuelan culture. The myth, however, did not remain purely national. Indeed, the chapter takes a closer look at several versions of the Doña Bárbara myth which, coincidentally, are all visual formats: Fernando de Fuentes' 1943 film *Doña Bárbara*; Betty Kaplan's 1998 film *Doña Bárbara*, and Telemundo's 2008-9 *telenovela Doña Bárbara*. The second half of the chapter focuses upon a mythic interpretation of Doña Bárbara. In examining all versions of the myth, common mythemes—or the basic, core elements—are identified. The myth is then broken down further into the following sub-mythemes, which lead to a deeper understanding of the myth's universal connotations: the hero's journey; the civilization/barbarity myth; and *femmes fatales*.

Chapter Three focuses upon the Anacaona and Hatuey myths. Following the same format as Chapter Two, this chapter begins with an examination of how Las Casas used these two Taíno *caciques* to promote his agenda and shed light upon Amerindian exploitation during the Spanish conquest and colonization. The myth is then examined further in the following written and film versions⁸: for the Anacaona myth, Salomé Ureña de Henríquez's epic poem *Anacaona* (1880) and Edwidge Danticat's novel *Anacaona: Golden Flower: Haiti, 1941* (2005); and for the Hatuey myth, Juan Cristóbal Nápoles Fajardo's poem "Hatuey y Guarina" (between 1848 and 1860); Francisco Sellén's play *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco partes* (1891); César Rodríguez Expósito's novel *Hatuey: el primer rebelde de Cuba* (1941); and Iciar Bollain's film *También la lluvia* (2010). The chapter concludes by identifying common mythemes, as well as analyzing the following sub-mythemes: the myth of the "noble savage"; and the myth of the martyr.

⁸ There is a 300-year gap between Las Casas' text and the first version studied here. This is, in large part, because the Anacaona and Hatuey myths were not reimagined in literary form until 19th-century Caribbean nationalist movements.

Chapter Four focuses upon the Andrés Chilibuina myth. Andrés Chilibuina is the indigenous protagonist of Jorge Icaza's novel *Huasipungo* (1934), which is considered the *indigenista* novel *par excellence* in Ecuador. As a purely national myth, Andrés Chilibuina became a symbol of indigenous justice during Ecuador's nation-building years, in which the *mestizo* population sought to bring attention to Amerindian exploitation under *gamonalismo*. Following the same format as Chapters Two and Three, Icaza's version of the myth is examined first followed by an examination of the following versions: Roberto Descalzi's play *El huasipungo de Andrés Chilibuina* (1964); Gustavo Guayasamín's short film *El cielo para la Cunshi, ¡carajo!* (1975); and Carlos Arcos Cabrera's novel *Memorias de Andrés Chilibuina* (2013). The chapter concludes with an identification of the common mythemes and an analysis of the following sub-mytheme: the postcolonial subaltern.

In taking a mythic approach to Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibuina, this dissertation builds upon previous scholarship and broadens the interpretive possibilities of the works discussed within it. Furthermore, it deepens our understanding of the cultural importance of myth within Latin America. While this dissertation focuses solely upon these four figures, the conclusion speculates upon how this type of analysis can be extended to other myths, in and outside Latin America. It concludes with a reflection on the present study and contemplates future projects that can extend our understanding of cultural myth in the Latin American context.

Chapter Two

Doña Bárbara and the Latin-American *Femme Fatale*: From National Allegory to Commodified Myth

“Usted no puede morir, porque las leyendas como Usted, mi doña, se quedan en el corazón y el alma de la gente...para siempre.”
(Melquíades in *Doña Bárbara*, Telemundo, 2008-9, 39:49-40:00).

Introduction

Melquíades’ closing remark of the *telenovela* series *Doña Bárbara* (2008-9) crystalizes the mythic proportions of Rómulo Gallegos’ infamous *femme fatale*. Sexy, dangerous, and mysterious, Doña Bárbara, aka “*La devoradora de hombres*” (or “man-eater”) has captivated Latin-American audiences since her original appearance in Gallegos’ 1929 novel. The original novel was written as a critique of Juan Vicente Gómez’s dictatorship (1908-35) and about the battle between civilization and barbarity that had ensued since Independence from Spain in 1811. Inspired by the Venezuelan *llano*, Gallegos sought to express Latin American reality. His solution was the creation of a cultural myth. *Doña Bárbara* became famous in and out of Venezuela, forming part of the literary canon. Since its original appearance, the story has been portrayed in numerous versions: movies, an opera,⁹ and television series—the most recent by the *telenovela*-powerhouse Telemundo. These versions have all been visual, enabling a wider dissemination.

Readily considered one of the most prominent literary females in Latin America, Doña Bárbara’s myth and symbolism has evolved throughout 20th- and 21st-century versions, thus converting her into a living legend. This chapter explores the mythical formation of Doña Bárbara as it occurs in two distinct phases: first, as a (inter)national

⁹ Isaac Chocrón (1930-2011) and Caroline Lloyd (1924-80) created the 1967 opera *Doña Bárbara*. The full opera soundtrack and lyrics are available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYCInBw0Iws>

allegory in Gallegos' novel; and later, as a commodified myth in its numerous film versions—Fernando de Fuentes's *Doña Bárbara* (1943), Betty Kaplan's *Doña Bárbara* (1998), and Telemundo's *telenovela Doña Bárbara* (2008-9). The first section offers a reading of Gallegos' text and the works that inspired its publication, and explores the versions mentioned. This section ends with a reading of the frontier myth found in both Gallegos' novel and Argentine Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's influential *Facundo: Civilización y barbarie* (1845). The second section analyzes the *Doña Bárbara* myth by breaking it into three mythic interpretations: the hero's journey, the civilization and barbarity myth, and the *femme fatale*. This section concludes with a discussion of the myth's subsequent commodification, examining the retrospective impact of contemporary versions upon *Doña Bárbara*'s original.

Rómulo Gallegos' *Doña Bárbara* (1929): Civilization and Barbarity on the Venezuelan *Llano*

Much like its mysterious protagonist, Rómulo Gallegos' *Doña Bárbara* (1929) emerged from the Venezuelan *llano*—the vast tropical plains to the east of the Andes. In April 1927, Gallegos, still basking in the popular success of *La trepadora* (1925), his second novel, began work on his next project about a young man traveling to San Fernando de Apure. Having never been to the *llano* himself, he ventured to the famed region of *La Candelaria* in search of authentic material.¹⁰ By the end of the eight-day trip, Gallegos was entranced with *llanero* life: "...the *rodeo*, the branding, the *doma*, the *recolecta*, the river-crossings, and many eager tongues to reel off tales of exploits, feuds, of *llanero* superstitions and customs in racy idiom and in *coplas*..." (Englekirk 261).

¹⁰ This area was considered the "pride of the Apure" and the "*llano* country par excellence" (Englekirk 259). For detailed information on San Fernando de Apure and Gallegos' trip, see John E. Englekirk's article "Doña Bárbara, Legend of the *Llano*" *Hispania* 31.3 (1948): 259-70.

Gallegos there became familiar with the story of “Doña Pancha,” a rich landowner whose legendary cruelty was known throughout. Gallegos quickly scrapped his original book idea and barely one month after returning to Caracas had completed *La Coronela* (1928),¹¹ an entirely new book-length manuscript. The only accessible copies of *La Coronela* today contain a 64-page partial manuscript. In this first draft of *Doña Bárbara*, Santos Luzardo and Luisana Luján, his new wife, travel to *Altamira*, his inherited estate, located in the Apure valley. As a child, his father moved his family, including Santos’ brother and sister, to Caracas to flee barbaric life on the *llano*. However, Santos had always been drawn to *llanero* life and, in an attempt to escape this barbaric calling, he decides to expatriate himself from Venezuela in order to start a new life in Europe with his future wife. These plans are halted when, after his father’s death, Doña Asunción, Santos’ mother, urges him to settle *Altamira*’s land disputes with La Coronela, owner of the neighboring estate *El Miedo* that once belonged to Lorenzo Barquero, Luzardo’s cousin, under the name “La Barquereña.” La Coronela, whose real name is Guadalupe, is a *mestiza* who acquired her estate by seducing Lorenzo, who in turn sold the estate to Coronel Apolinar. Guadalupe married the Coronel, who shortly thereafter disappeared, leaving her the land and title “La Coronela.” Santos and Luisana arrive to the *llano* and devise their own plan to “civilize” *Altamira*. In fact, the civilization/barbarity dichotomy is made very explicit in this version. The city represented civilization and the *llano*, barbarity, although Santos laments that civilization had yet to penetrate Caracas itself: “Pero aquella alta idea que para él representaba la ‘Ciudad’ era un sueño imposible todavía en su país. Sólo en los grandes centros civilizados de Europa podría encontrarla

¹¹ It is believed Gallegos chose this name originally because in *La Coronela Bárbara* (whose name is Guadalupe in this version) was married to Coronel Apolinar, whereas in *Doña Bárbara*, he appears only briefly in the chapter “La devoradora de hombres” (Shaw 266).

realizada” (21). The text ends abruptly at the “*doma*,” in which Santos must tame a wild horse and prove that he is a “true *llanero*,” an act that also symbolizes his ability to civilize the *llano*.¹² Gallegos eagerly sent *La Coronela* off to press yet halted publication in order to insert revisions. Soon afterwards, Gallegos accompanied his wife to Italy for health reasons. During the three-month recovery period, he reworked the *La Coronela* manuscript into what would be his third—and most famous—novel.

Doña Bárbara takes place in the heart of the Apure *llano*. After years of absence in Caracas, Santos Luzardo, a recent law graduate, returns to the *llano* to sell *Altamira*, his inherited estate. Even before reaching the *llano*, he hears the legend of the sadistic Doña Bárbara who, known simply as “*La devoradora de hombres*,” owns *El Miedo*, the neighboring estate. It is said she uses her beauty and *brujería* (black magic) in order to coerce men into evil before destroying them. After a stint in *Altamira*, Luzardo sees potential in bringing civilization to the plains, decides to keep the estate, and soon reunites with Lorenzo Barquero, his estranged cousin, after years of tragic family feuds. Years prior, Barquero, an alcoholic and Doña Bárbara’s former lover, had lost his land to “*La devoradora de hombres*.” He and Marisela, their daughter, live in poverty in the desolate “*palmar de La Chusmita*.” Luzardo quickly takes them in and begins a side project to “civilize” Marisela by weakening the *llano*’s barbarous hold on her. Battles ensue between the neighbors over land and cattle as Luzardo discovers that Doña Bárbara’s illegal practices have corrupted the local legal system. It becomes clear, however, that Doña Bárbara develops an attraction to Luzardo, who by novel’s end is posed to marry Marisela. The feud soon turns fatal as peons from both estates kill each

¹² “[i]La doma! La prueba máxima de llanería, la demostración de capacidad que esperaban de [Santos] aquellos hombres para poder acatarlo” (64).

other over valuable feathers intended to be sold in the city. This proves to be the breaking point for Doña Bárbara who, at the end of the novel, returns her land to Marisela—its rightful owner—and disappears from the *llano* for good.

Almost immediately following its 1929 publication, *Doña Bárbara* was hailed a classic, thus joining Mariano Azuela's *Los de abajo* (1915), José Eustacio Rivera's *La vorágine* (1924), and Ricardo Güiraldes' *Don Segundo Sombra* (1926) as Latin America's regionalist canon—*la novela de la tierra*. Amidst the continent's élite nation-building projects, these authors sought to uncover Latin-American identity by shifting focus from European models to the autochthonous. Regionalist texts both celebrate the continent's cultural heritage and seek to understand the forces behind sociopolitical and economic issues. Their goal is to create solutions from within instead of importing foreign ideology. In Venezuela, *Doña Bárbara* was (and still is) considered the regionalist novel *par excellence*. Critics and *llaneros* alike were impressed by Gallegos' realistic portrayal of the region's landscape and life. Indeed, the *llanero*'s story was soon projected internationally, with several Spanish editions printed throughout South America and Spain,¹³ a 1930 English translation by Robert Malloy, and a 1943 film version starring Mexican starlet María Félix. As Carlos J. Alonso has pointed out, “[i]t is the case that until the advent of the so-called ‘Boom,’ [*Doña Bárbara*] was *the* representative Latin-American novel, widely translated and read throughout the world” (his emphasis, 111). Despite spending only eight days on the *llano*, Gallegos was hailed a “true *llanero*,” or, as one critic boasted, “Don Rómulo Gallegos ha vivido, sin duda, la vida amplia y

¹³ In Donald Shaw's 1974 article “Gallegos' Revision of *Doña Bárbara* 1929-1930,” he cites almost 60 Spanish editions, “one of which was of 50,000 copies” (265).

libre del inmenso llano y sabe reflejarla en sus múltiples aspectos con una sobriedad y un verismo bien poco tropicales, por cierto” (González 167).

Doña Bárbara is readily considered one of the most popular and influential national novels in Venezuela.¹⁴ Regionalist texts are often referred to as *novelas de la tierra*, although Carlos J. Alonso’s extensive study on these novels has noted the polemical nature of this term.¹⁵ While Alonso chooses not to offer a new definition or to avoid constructing a “generic model” that “regard[s] them as discrete positivities, as coherent actualizations (however faithful) of the specified generic paradigm” (43-4), one cannot deny one common feature of these texts: a concern for the autochthonous. As Doris Sommer has noted, these authors “proposed to be distinctly and originally American by capturing the autochthonous qualities of American life, in the country rather than the Europeanized cities” (391). Sommer’s *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (1991), perhaps the most comprehensive study of so-called national novels, notes the strong “foundational bonds between...[national] literature and legislation,” so much so that she refers to texts such as *Doña Bárbara* as “foundational fictions” (4). The fact that Gallegos was also a politician was hardly unique; Pedro Henríquez Ureña’s influential *Literary Currents in Latin America* (1945) reveals only a partial list of author-politicians, 27 of whom became presidents of their respective

¹⁴ In Doris Sommer’s *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (1991), she points out that the novel did not have many competitors, citing only two: Manuel Romero García’s *Peonía* (1890) and Eduardo Blanco’s *Zárate* (1882). Novels such as José Eustasio Rivera’s *La vorágine* (1924), considered a Colombian national novel, had to compete, for instance, with Jorge Isaacs’ *María* (1867). *Doña Bárbara*’s popularity did inspire other works. Spanish author Camilo José Cela, for example, published *La catira* (1955), which attempted to redefine the Venezuelan *llano*, down to the *llanero*’s own language. The novel caused quite a scandal and Cela did not publish any further works on Venezuela.

¹⁵ Alonso’s research finds differing views of the term: it is an exhausted literature (Mario Benedetti), a “primitive” literature (Mario Vargas Llosa), an umbrella term for 1940s Latin-American literature (Emir Rodríguez Monegal), a point of departure for all literature that follows (Arturo Torres Riosco), and a point of origin that only highlights the advances of “la nueva novela hispanoamericana” (Carlos Fuentes) (38-40). For more information, see his chapter “The *novela de la tierra*.”

countries (before 1945) (243). However, it does explain the novel's political nature. As Sommer has suggested, the majority of these novels are "almost inevitably stories of star-crossed lovers who represent particular regions, races, parties, economic interests..." whose "conjugal and sexual union spills over to a sentimental readership in a move that hopes to win partisan minds along with hearts" (5). Gallegos explores this metaphor in *Doña Bárbara* as well as in other novels: *Canaima* (1935) analyzes the Amazon region; and *El forastero* (1943) the northern region. Indeed, Gallegos even described the debate between civilization and barbarity as "las dos fuerzas contrarias que mueven el cuerpo social venezolano" (qtd. in Englekirk 260).

In *Doña Bárbara*, Gallegos juxtaposes Santos Luzardo with Doña Bárbara to create several binaries, respectively: civilization/barbarity, city/*llano*, national/foreign, male/female, real/unreal, light/darkness, good/evil, and right/wrong, among others. As avatars for the various binaries, Luzardo and Doña Bárbara both adhere to a strict mortality. And yet, at times they appear conflicted by its results. For instance, after killing one of Doña Bárbara's peons Luzardo feels guilty when, in actuality, his actions were in self-defense. Luzardo was clearly in the right, and the latter in the wrong. While the novel adheres to these unwavering binaries as it presents the Luzardo-Doña Bárbara conflict, Sommer and Roberto González Echevarría have also noted that the story's land disputes present a much more complicated issue. While demonstrating Doña Bárbara's defiance of the law, the disputes also question the law's very legitimacy. While the Luzardo-Barquero clan has legal rights to the land, Evaristo Luzardo, Santos' grandfather, had in fact stolen the land from the local Amerindians, thus begging the question of genealogical rights. Since Doña Bárbara is part-Baniba, she could arguably

claim ownership of the land by natural right. All of this presents a moral conflict; Luzardo recovers the land by “maneuvering through fine print,” (Sommer 285) despite the violent ways in which Evaristo acquired it. Both González Echevarría and Sommer agree that this “moral and semantic undecidability” is precisely what makes the novel “precociously modern” (Sommer 285). This “undecidability” is also a characteristic of the populist movement. Sommer continues: “In order for ‘developing’ countries to secure a sovereign and solvent condition in the world, populists tend to advocate further development; but since what is being protected is a certain national difference that resists becoming an extension or a clone of the industrial powers, populists tend to celebrate local traditions” (283). They also both note that Lorenzo Barquero, not Luzardo, represents this conflict between moral rights and legal rights. Sommer notes: “Lorenzo Barquero, the once-brilliant law student who dropped out of everything once he saw through the fiction of all language; one cannot use it without lying, and one cannot be human without using it” (285); González Echevarría states: “Lorenzo represents the defeat of language as well as its triumph; the defeat because it leads to no self-revelation, except to a negative understanding; the triumph because meaning, even if it is a series of lies, can only dwell in language itself” (54).

It is unclear whether or not *La Coronela* was widely distributed, yet the limited access to the text suggests that it was not popular. This, perhaps, is what prompted Gallegos to rework the manuscript. While there are major differences in narrative structure between the accessible version of *La Coronela* and the first version of *Doña Bárbara* (1929), the following are the most notable changes: 1) Luzardo is unmarried,

thus facilitating a love triangle;¹⁶ 2) Doña Bárbara and Luzardo both have childhood traumas: she is raped and he witnesses his brother's murder at the hands of his father. Despite popularity of the novel's first version, Gallegos again made significant revisions to the 1930, second edition. Donald Shaw identified the following prominent changes: 1) Luzardo and Doña Bárbara's conflict becomes more visible; and 2) the *cerca*¹⁷ and *quesera*¹⁸, symbols of Luzardo's attempt to "civilize" the *llano*, are underscored.¹⁹ All later editions are based on the 1930 edition; in fact, very few copies of the 1929 first edition survive. Despite these important changes, many have argued that Gallegos' editing process ultimately led to an overworked text. Indeed, Gallegos' presence is felt throughout the 1930 edition; most evident, as Carlos J. Alonso has pointed out, in the addition of a glossary. In an attempt to provide local lore, the glossary "projected into the novel supposedly [Gallegos'] *a posteriori* role as interpreter..." (127), thus ultimately creating an overworked text. Gallegos' revisions were meant to increase the novel's allegory. And yet, the author oversaturated the text's allegorical nature to the point that surface meaning (civilization versus barbarity) now appeared as a complex symbolic web that opens up a number of interpretive possibilities, ranging from the novel's critique of Juan Vicente Gómez's dictatorship (1908-35) and questions of legitimate land ownership (Carlos J. Alonso, Ernest A. Johnson), to a psychological study of the *llanero* and a discourse on *machismo* and femininity (André S. Michalski, Stephen Henighan, Victorien

¹⁶ Because we only have access to a seemingly partial version of the text, it is unclear whether or not La Coronela falls in love with Luzardo later in the story.

¹⁷ As the text explains: "No obstante, Luzardo se quedó pensando en la necesidad de implantar la costumbre de la cerca. Por ella empezaría la civilización de la llanura; la cerca sería el derecho contra la acción todopoderosa de la fuerza, la necesaria limitación del hombre ante los principios" (82)

¹⁸ As the text explains: "Y mientras allá en la quesera comenzaba así la civilización de la barbarie del ganado, en las cimarroneras no descansaban los lazos" (164).

¹⁹ The revisions include the following: "the addition of almost 20,000 words of new or rewritten material and significant structural rearrangement of the text" (Shaw 266).

Lavou Zoungbo). Despite such endless interpretations, the most accepted one—acknowledged by Gallegos himself—is that the character of Doña Bárbara becomes a metaphor for corruption (barbarity), as posed to the modern Venezuelan state (civilization), and specifically, under President Juan Vicente Gómez (1908-35).²⁰

Of all the dichotomies mentioned, civilization/barbarity is the most definitive one. Indeed, one cannot read *Doña Bárbara* without acknowledging the influence of this binary theme stemming from its introduction in Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's *Facundo: Civilización y barbarie* (1845). The Argentine writer, educator, and former president (1868-74) was not only influential during his own time period, but paved the way for modern positivist thinking in Latin America. In *Facundo*, his most influential text, Sarmiento contemplates the two forces that governed Argentina under vicious dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas (1835-52): civilization and barbarity.²¹ The text analyses gaucho Juan Facundo Quiroga's (1788-1835) political career; a real-life figure who, much like Rosas, "inspired awe and hatred in the mind of an entire generation" (Stavans ix). *Gauchos* hold a special place in Argentine literature; a national symbol that inspired generations of artists,²² as well as the literary current of *la literatura gauchesca*.²³ While

²⁰ Although Gallegos never mentioned Gómez directly when speaking about the novel, he did acknowledge this as a national allegory in a 1954 essay "Cómo conocí a Doña Bárbara": "era un símbolo de lo que estaba ocurriendo en Venezuela en los campos de la historia política" (530).

²¹ Diana Sorensen has noted that the term "civilization" first appeared among French intellectuals in the 18th century as a way to "fill in the gaps" left by existing terms: "The word *civilization*, then, was specifically needed to designate the triumph of reason in the political, intellectual, and moral senses. It proclaimed the spirit of the Encyclopédie, of rational and experimental science. Its self-reflexive stance is indicative of an emergent consciousness about the development of collective life, and it is soon aware of other civilizations, while retaining a sense of critical mastery over the other. Thus, it was bound up with its opposite inasmuch as it entailed a view of the perfectibility of human society away from the primitive, savage, barbarous early stages" (her emphasis, 8). This term, however, soon evolved into an "ideology of empire" and "cultural superiority" in the nineteenth century and, as noted by Roberto Fernández Retamar, the dichotomy of civilization-barbarity was engrained in capitalism by the 20th century (Sorensen 9).

²² For a comprehensive list, see Ilan Stavans's Introduction to *Facundo: Or, Civilization and Barbarism* (1998): p.xvii.

this literature presented a romantic version of gaucho life, Sarmiento saw the gauchos' "barbaric" ways as an imminent threat to Argentina's future; the *pampa* as a dangerous space. The nation's solution could be found in the city, and through education and the importation of European ideas (and peoples) Argentina would become a progressive state.

Sarmiento conceived his influential text while in exile in Chile.²⁴ The book consists of three sections: first, a sociological study of the *gaucho*; second, a biography of Quiroga; and third, a critique of Rosas' dictatorship. To begin with, the first section offers a descriptive overview of the *pampa* and the elements that have impacted its inhabitants negatively.²⁵ Sarmiento then divides the *gaucho* population into several sub-groups that vary in their degree of "barbarity": *el rastreador*, *el baqueano*, *el gaucho malo*, and *el cantor*. Despite creating an apparently scientific study, Sarmiento had never actually been to the *pampa*. Rather, he constructed the region solely on what he had heard or read. Secondly, Sarmiento presents a biography of Quiroga's life in order to stress the barbarity that continued to plague Argentina under Rosas' dictatorship.²⁶ However,

²³ Stavans also notes: "For the most part, this literature was produced by urban criollos who tended to romanticize the gaucho and have shaped what has come to be known as *la literatura gauchesca*. The concept is problematic and is different from *la literatura gaucha*: whereas the latter, as rudimentary as it might be, is a byproduct of the gaucho himself, the former is an appropriation by a remote observer, a nonparticipant often from the city and infatuated with gaucho ways." (xvii-iii).

²⁴ It first appeared serially as *Vida de Quiroga* in the Chilean newspaper *El Progreso* from May 12 to June 21, 1845. It was published as a complete text later that year (Stavans vii).

²⁵ "La parte habitada de este país privilegiado en dones, y que encierra todos los climas, puede dividirse en tres fisonomías distintas, que imprimen a la población condiciones diversas, según la manera como tiene que entenderse con la naturaleza que la rodea. Al norte, confundiéndose con el Chaco, un espeso bosque cubre, con su impenetrable ramaje, extensiones que llamaríamos inauditas, si en formas colosales hubiese nada inaudito en toda la extensión de la América. Al centro, y en una zona paralela, se disputan largo tiempo el terreno, la pampa y la selva; domina en partes el bosque, se degrada en matorrales enfermizos y espinosos; preséntase de nuevo la selva, a merced de algún río que la favorece, hasta que, al fin, al sur, triunfa la pampa y ostenta su lisa y velluda frente, infinita, sin límite conocido, sin accidente notable: es la imagen del mar en la tierra, la tierra como en el mapa; la tierra aguardando todavía que se la mande producir las plantas y toda clase de simiente" (24).

²⁶ "Facundo no ha muerto; está vivo en las tradiciones populares, en la política y revoluciones argentinas; en Rosas, su heredero, su complemento: su alma ha pasado a este otro molde, más acabado, más perfecto; y

Sarmiento wrote the text in Santiago, Chile with limited historical resources, relying primarily on his own memory. This pseudo-biographical quality caused several critics, including Sarmiento's former friend-turned-foe Juan Bautista Alberdi, to critique the book harshly. Alberdi labelled it "a fable decked out as a document," referring to it as "a sort of *political mythology* with a political base" (his emphasis, qtd. in Stavans xxi-ii). However, as Stavans has noted, the popular biography genre of this time period was quite different from its contemporary counterpart: "It was a branch of history which allowed the observer to interject his own interpretations of historical events...The objective was to create a *mélange*, a conglomeration of views rather than a linear and progressive narrative" (ix-x).²⁷ The problem with Sarmiento's text was that he failed to provide views other than his own, thus creating a biased perspective that favored the urban over the rural. Lastly, the book's third section offers a direct critique of Rosas' regime, yet it was removed from the second and third editions, in 1851 and 1868, respectively. Sarmiento's motivation remains unclear, but one can speculate that he somehow saw this section's overt political tone as unnecessary for his own cause. By 1851, Rosas' dictatorship was coming to an end and by 1868, Sarmiento began his own presidential campaign.

The civilization/barbarity dichotomy is explicit throughout the text, beginning with the title. For Sarmiento, the city was the epicenter of civilization and the *pampa* was a breeding ground for barbarity. Rosas' corrupt regime proved that barbarity had crept into the urban political infrastructure, and Sarmiento attributes this to his rural

lo que en él era sólo instinto, iniciación, tendencia, convirtiéndose en Rosas en sistema, efecto y fin." (Sarmiento 8).

²⁷ Alberdi, a member of the Asociación de Mayo, was not Sarmiento's sole critic. As Stavans points out, "Valentín Alsina, another prominent unitarian exile from the Asociación de Mayo, wrote a letter in Montevideo in 1846 to Sarmiento in an attempt to correct, in the form of fifty-one notes, the many errors and exactitudes" (xxii).

upbringing. However, instead of recounting Rosas' political and personal lives outrightly, he uses Juan Facundo Quiroga—an Argentine *caudillo* who hailed from the rural *La Rioja* region and rose to military power as Argentina formed its newly-independent state—as avatar. He does, however, identify Rosas—born in Buenos Aires to a wealthy family, yet one of the nation's most notorious *caudillos*—as an extension of Quiroga's barbarity, a cycle that continues to plague Argentine politics:

Facundo no ha muerto; está vivo en las tradiciones populares, en la política y revoluciones argentinas; en Rosas, su heredero, su complemento: su alma ha pasado a este otro molde, más acabado, más perfecto; y lo que en él era sólo instinto, iniciación, tendencia, convirtiéndose en Rosas en sistema, efecto y fin. La naturaleza campestre, colonial y bárbara, cambióse en esta metamorfosis en arte, en sistema y en política regular capaz de presentarse a la faz del mundo, como el modo de ser de un pueblo encarnado en un hombre, que ha aspirado a tomar los aires en un genio que domina los acontecimientos, los hombres y las cosas. Facundo, provinciano, bárbaro, valiente, audaz, fue reemplazado por Rosas, hijo de la culta Buenos Aires, sin serlo él: por Rosas, falso, corazón helado, espíritu calculador, que hace el mal sin pasión, y organiza lentamente el despotismo con toda la inteligencia de un Maquiavelo. Tirano sin rival hoy en la tierra” (8-9).

Indeed, Sarmiento recognized that the *caudillo* mentality had infiltrated the government far too long, a mentality born in the *pampa* and which now spread throughout the city. As a strong proponent of positivism, Sarmiento called upon

Argentine citizens to combat this barbarity and recognize the value of importing not only progressive and scientific ideas from Europe, but people as well. This is not to say that reducing Argentina's problems to this civilization/barbarity dichotomy became a definitive solution. As we will see later in *Doña Bárbara*, adhering to strict binary oppositions—an “either/or” mentality—breaks down the established dichotomy. While a plethora of critics have come down both for and against Sarmiento's ideology, the civilization/barbarity dichotomy did open up a debate over the link of culture to society, one that not only influenced Argentina,²⁸ but the entire American continent.

Facundo had a lasting imprint on Latin-American thought, so it is no surprise that Gallegos acknowledged Sarmiento's influence upon his own analysis of Venezuela. This is evident as early as 1912 in his short story “Los aventureros” which implemented Sarmiento's civilization/barbarity dichotomy; but *Doña Bárbara* is, arguably, *Facundo*'s most explicit avatar: the *llano* is the *pampa*; the *llanero*, the *gaucho*; and Doña Bárbara, Juan Facundo Quiroga. As in Sarmiento's text, Doña Bárbara is a metaphor for both the *llano* and for Juan Vicente Gómez's dictatorship, thus converting Venezuela's physical frontier (the *llano*), as well as its ideological one (the country as a space of potential modernity), into a symbol of barbarity. Sarmiento's influence is undeniable. And yet, Gallegos does not adhere strictly to the Argentine's ideology. In fact, he makes clear that he breaks from Sarmiento in several key ways. For example, his perception of Mister Danger, a foreigner who, instead of representing a civilizing force, represents imperialist damage. As such, Mister Danger himself, while hailing from the city and, therefore, an alleged proponent of civilization, is, ironically, one of Doña Bárbara's barbaric avatars;

²⁸ For a comprehensive study of the influence of *Facundo* in Argentine culture, see Diana Sorensen's *Facundo and the Construction of Argentine Culture* (1996).

he blurs the civilization/barbarity dichotomy. Separately, though analogously, Doña Bárbara is the gendered metaphor for Venezuela's current state, Marisela is its future, a future that must be protected from foreign invasion. While Sarmiento saw the foreigner as beneficial, Gallegos saw it as dangerous. In the novel, this is epitomized as Mister Danger tries incessantly to take Marisela (sexually) while Luzardo protects her honor. This leads to another key difference between Gallegos and Sarmiento: the idealization of the *llano*. As mentioned, Gallegos was applauded for presenting a realistic portrayal of the *llano*, one of which *llaneros* were even proud. While the novel does at times read like a sociological study of Venezuela's own "*gaucho*," no such critical representation appears. Gallegos agreed that ideas should be reinforced in the city and then spread onto the countryside. We see this in Luzardo's project to connect *Altamira* to Caracas. However, there exists no urgency to rid the country of *llanero* life. Gallegos, in fact, was so intrigued by *llanero* culture that *Cantaclaro* (1934), his next book, was entirely based on *llanero* coplas. Gallegos' shift from the foreign to the autochthonous, to celebrating Venezuela's unique cultural heritage and focusing upon change from within, reflected his own times. Since *Facundo*'s original publication, influential texts such as José Martí's "Nuestra América" (1892) and José Vasconcelos' *La raza cósmica* (1925) celebrated Latin-American autochthony and criticized scientific theories of racial superiority and suppression. The hemisphere's political landscape had also changed. Gallegos' demonization of Mister Danger reacted against the threat of U.S. imperialism.

Years before Hugo Chávez's infamous presidency (1999-2013), one of Venezuela's most notorious and (inter)nationally controversial dictators was Juan Vicente Gómez (1908-35). Both Gómez and Chávez were known for their nation-

building projects and non-apologetic leadership that often suppressed political opposition through fear.²⁹ Their regimes differed drastically, however. Whereas Chávez was (and still is) considered the 21st-century face of Socialist reform in Latin America, Gómez relied heavily on foreign capitalism in order to solidify the nation's economy and international standing.

Gómez first became president as the result of a coup against Cipriano Castro Ruiz's military dictatorship (1899-1908). Despite the interim presidencies of José Gil Fortoul (1913-14), Victorino Márquez Bustillos (1914-22), and Juan Bautista Pérez (1929-31), Gómez remained influential. H.E. Chehabi and Juan Linz have noted that Gómez's political practice, known as *gomecismo*, was characteristic of a "sultanistic" regime, as opposed to an authoritarian or totalitarian regime. The term, coined originally by Max Weber to describe "an extreme case of patrimonialism" (Chehabi and Linz 4), entails "the concentration of discretionary authority in the hands of a ruler who advances state and personal power through a mixture of rewards and repression" (Yarrington 12). Although the oil industry projected Venezuela's economy into the modern era, *gomecismo* corrupted the system through the dictator's own personal economic endeavors, so much so that by the time of his death, Gómez was one of the richest men in Latin America (Wilgus 64). Indeed, the Dictator would be remembered ultimately for his corrupt and tyrannical rule, one that resulted in the exile, imprisonment, and execution of tens of thousands of people. As critic A. Curtis Wilgus noted candidly, "Probably more people rejoiced when Gómez, Dictator of Venezuela, died than had ever rejoiced at the death of any other South American autocrat" (64).

²⁹ For more information about Gómez's political terror see Thomas Rourke's *Gómez, Tyrant of the Andes*. New York, W. Morrow & Company, 1936; and Chávez, see Enrique Krauze's *El poder y el delirio*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores, 2008.

It was precisely one of Gómez's numerous *hatos*—or cattle camps—that Gallegos visited in the spring of 1927. Little is known about the author's trip (apart from what we have already mentioned), or the nature of his book research. And yet, it appears that the eight days spent on the plains reignited in Gallegos an idea he had entertained years prior: civilization and barbarity as played out on the Venezuelan *llano*.

It is known widely that Gallegos based many of *Doña Bárbara*'s characters on real-life people. In his landmark 1948 article, critic John E. Englekirk chronicled the real-life sources for *Doña Bárbara*'s characters. Englekirk travelled to *La Candelaria* in search of Antonio Torrealba, the real-life inspiration for Antonio Sandoval, Santos Luzardo's foreman. Much like his fictional counterpart, Torrealba was Gallegos' guide during his 1927 trip. He introduced Gallegos to the land and ranch life and later provided the author with the extensive compilation of *coplas* that now appear in both *Doña Bárbara* and *Cantaclaro* (1934). Englekirk noted that Torrealba also provided him with a long list of *llaneros* who inspired many of the novel's secondary characters.³⁰ Gallegos' faithful representation of the *llano* also extended to the region's geography: "[o]f the approximately fifty bayous, streams, rivers, ranches, towns, cities, and states mentioned, twenty-five or more are easily identifiable on even the least adequate of maps, and over half of the remainder can be definitely associated with existing sites" (Englekirk 267). Early reviews praised the novel's realistic portrayal of the Venezuelan countryside, one even suggesting that Nature, not Doña Bárbara, was the novel's true protagonist.³¹

³⁰ For an extensive list, see p. 263-7.

³¹ "To quote Ricardo Baeza: '*Doña Bárbara* is a...marvel of internal equilibrium; the importance of the setting, the land itself, which after all is the chief protagonist...' " (qtd. in S.L. Millard Rosenberg's review of the novel, 1930).

Gallegos had mapped out the Venezuelan *llano*, creating a guide for those interested in retracing Santos Luzardo's voyage from the urban center to the rural periphery.

Gallegos himself, in his 1954 essay "Cómo conocí a Doña Bárbara," discussed the inspiration for the novel's characters. He admitted that while Santos Luzardo, Marisela, and Mister Danger were fictional, the *llaneros* he met were responsible for the novel's true spirit.³² And yet, the inspiration for Doña Bárbara herself remains shrouded in mystery. Readily considered the most well-known female character in Latin American literature, Doña Bárbara is said to have been inspired by a real-life "*Devoradora de hombres*":

In the early decades of this [20th] century on extensive holdings along the Arauca some 150 miles west by southwest of San Fernando there lived a woman by the name of Francisca Vázquez who became famous as the *hombruna* or *marimacho*³³ of *hato* Mata El Totumo. She must have been skilled in the ways of the *llano* and capable of holding her own with any man. By the time Gallegos reached the *llano* in 1927, Doña Pancha had already become something of a legend. She was still alive at the time. Common report places her death in the very late nineteen twenties. Gallegos did not get to meet her, nor did he visit her ranch. Antonio Torrealba, however, had seen her many times, and one can only begin to imagine what stories he must have told Gallegos of her prowess, her cunning, her greed, and her mastery of men! (Englekirk 268-9)

³² See p.530-2 of *Una posición en la vida*. Ed. Raúl Roa. Mexico City: Ediciones Humanismo, 1954.

³³ In English, *hombruna* is "mannish" and *marimacho* is "tomboy" (my translation).

Englekirk's description, supplied by Antonio, is almost identical to Doña Bárbara's presentation in the novel's first chapter. Luzardo first learns of Doña Bárbara while in transit to *Altamira*. Travelling along the Río Orinoco, he asks the boat's captain about the infamous *femme fatale*, whose legend reaches as far as San Fernando: "Dicen que es una mujer terrible, capitana de una pandilla de bandoleros, encargados de asesinar a mansalva a cuantos intenten oponerse a sus designios" (10). Much like Doña Pancha, she is a living legend, as well as an *hombruna* and *marimacho*. The similarities continue. According to Englekirk, some *llaneros* said that Doña Pancha also never married, yet had a daughter and son; others claim she was childless.³⁴ Court documents, rather than hearsay, do show, according to Englekirk, that Doña Pancha participated in several land disputes, the most famous of which was with Don Pablo Castillo in 1922.³⁵ This lawsuit seems to have been the inspiration for the plot's conflict between Doña Bárbara and Santos Luzardo. However, while Doña Bárbara is known for a striking physical beauty that draws men in before destroying them, Englekirk revealed that "[Doña Pancha] was short and stocky and even 'fea'...dressed in a slovenly manner and like a man while on the range..." (269).

³⁴ "All seem to agree that Doña Pancha never married. Antonio will claim, however, that she had two offspring: one, a daughter, who is said to be still alive on her mother's lands that have long since become the property of the Hernández Vázquez; the other, a son, who was killed by 'toro bravo.' But Mariano Pardo of the 'toddy' parlor on Plaza Páez in San Fernando will deny that Doña Pancha left any children" (Englekirk 269).

³⁵ "Both [Antonio and Mariano Pardo] recall the most sensational of these trials, which took place in San Fernando around 1922. This time it was Doña Bárbara versus Don Pablo Castillo. The defense was in the able hands of lawyer Pensión Hernández; the prosecution was magnificently conducted by no less a figure, so they say, than today's distinguished poet and statesman, Andrés Eloy Blanco. The trial proved to be the crowning event of many a day. People would crowd the court from early morning on, thrilled by the eloquence of the 'dos bonitos abogados'" (Englekirk 269).

Despite Doña Pancha's probable influence on Gallegos' creative process, one cannot deny the strongest inspiration for Doña Bárbara: Juan Vicente Gómez, as Gallegos himself told Luis Enrique Osorio in a 1936 interview:

[*Doña Bárbara*] nació en un hato de Juan Vicente Gómez...el Hato de la Candelaria. Allí asimilé ese olor a vacadas y a moñiga de que mi novela está llena. También sentí, a través del cuadro campesino, el hálito de la barbarie que afligía a mi patria. Instintivamente perseguí el símbolo, y apareció con toda su fuerza la protagonista. No era aquello intencional, pero sí intuitivo. Y a eso puede quizá atribuirse el buen éxito: a la humanidad que hay en el mismo hecho extraordinario (99).

And yet, despite the fact that Gómez' stand-in is the most accepted reading, Gallegos never did actually confirm that his novel was a critique of his corrupt dictatorship. As a result, his own descriptions of the novel appear either superficial or, in many ways, cryptic. In the same 1936 interview, Osorio asked Gallegos if his novel had been censored, to which he replied, "[s]e comenzó a decir...que Doña Bárbara era la imagen del gomecismo. El rumor llegó a Maracay, y esto comenzó a formarme cierto ambiente hostil" (99). Indeed, Gómez himself did not seem to make a connection between Doña Bárbara and himself, as it is said that he enjoyed reading the novel so thoroughly that while on one of his *hatos*, he had his chauffeur continue reading it to him, long into the night, under the car beams (Alonso 109). The novel's commercial success thrust Gallegos into the limelight and in 1931, Gómez himself even appointed the author Senator for the Apure region. While Gallegos held a strong interest in politics, he soon found he could not comply with *gomecista* ideology. He was a peaceful man who

avoided confrontation and in the end could not abandon his populist principles. Thus, he renounced the Senate position almost immediately and exiled himself to New York. In 1932, Gallegos moved to Spain, where he remained until Gómez's death in 1935, whereupon he returned to Venezuela and went on to have a fruitful political career, even assuming the Venezuelan presidency for a brief period in 1948.³⁶

One cannot help but draw connections between Doña Bárbara and Gómez. Doña Bárbara, like Gómez, is a *mestiza*.³⁷ The young Juan Vicente grew up among *llaneros*, who abided by a distinct system: "It was a hard life and a brutal one in many ways. All the cattlemen were really bands of half-wild Indians, cattle-stealing was considered a fairly legitimate business and the only real law was the law of the *güinche* which was their way of saying Winchester, a general term they used for rifle" (Rourke 36). Indeed, much like Doña Bárbara, Gómez came from humble roots, only teaching himself to read and write at age fourteen, after his step-father's death. As the oldest son, Gómez was the sole heir to the estate and over the next years grew the cattle farm *La Mulera* by using both his wit and fear tactics. Clearly the most obvious parallel between Doña Bárbara and Gómez is that they are both corrupt large landowners who use fearful tactics to increase property and control their peons. In the novel Doña Bárbara is notorious, much like Gómez, for her control over the legal system and, in particular, her manipulation of land

³⁶ Evidently, Gallegos felt threatened to the point that he needed to seek exile. The author, of course, was not alone; Thomas Rourke notes in his *Gómez: Tyrant of the Andes* a long list of fellow Venezuelan exiles and states, "In Venezuela it became impossible to speak a word in either direct or implied criticism of the government or of the personal conduct of Gómez or any of his clan without the near-certainty of having it overheard and suffering the consequences" (159). Interestingly, Thomas Rourke is a pseudonym, suggesting, perhaps, that the author himself needed to protect his identity from his book's harsh criticism of Gómez.

³⁷ Gómez's mother, Hermenegilda Chacón, was an Amerindian and his father, Evaristo García, was a *criollo*. In fact, Gómez's father took his mother initially as a mistress, but she soon tired of the arrangement and moved her two children to San Antonio, Venezuela where she became the mistress to cattle farmer Pedro Cornelio Gómez.

documents. Indeed, it is well known that upon assuming the presidency, Gómez made a false entry in the country's birth records in order to make his birth in San Antonio on July 24th coincide with Simón Bolívar's.³⁸ The entry was a political move to equate the new dictator to *El Libertador*, and "[Gómez] had the false entry photographed and published in the Caracas newspaper" (Rourke 35). Given the similarities between Doña Bárbara and Gómez, it becomes clear that Gallegos understood the dangers that Gómez' dictatorship posed to Venezuela's future and, therefore, wrote his novel precisely in order to underscore this fear.

Nineteenth-century Latin America faced a new postcolonial era and many elite intellectuals saw the end of the wars of independence as a means by which peripheral nations could now move towards modernity. Gómez was no different. Much like Bolívar, Gómez believed his ideology would lead Venezuela to a better future. And yet, Gómez as dictator became precisely what Bolívar had feared. While on his deathbed, *El Libertador* proclaimed: "Los pueblos [americanos] caerán en manos de vulgares tiranuelos" (qtd. in Rourke v). Gallegos, as opposed to Gómez, was an educator—many of his loyal apprentices indeed followed his footsteps into exile. *Doña Bárbara*'s didactic lessons offered a solution to Venezuela's problems. From a strictly rhetorical approach, the representation of the civilization/barbarity conflict is evident in the protagonists' names: Santos—"santo" or saint; Luzardo—"luz" or light/reason; and Bárbara, meaning "barbaric." The characters' names are allegories: Luzardo, who represents civilization, brings progressive ideas (light/reason) to the *llano*; Doña Bárbara epitomizes the barbarity that the *llano* has been subjected to under a corrupt system. Their respective estates hold rhetorical symbolism as well: Santos' *Altamira*, or "High View," incites an

³⁸ Gómez's real birth record is unknown, aside from his birth place: Colombia.

image of superiority or, perhaps, a goal to be attained, such as spreading civilization; Doña Bárbara's "El Miedo" alludes to fear of a corrupt, barbaric system, such as Gómez' dictatorship.

Luzardo arrives in *Altamira* and with him he brings progressive ideas: he will end *caudillismo* by establishing natural order and create civilization by building a *cerca*, a physical divide between civilization (Santos' estate) and barbarity (Doña Bárbara's). The fence will bring order by reestablishing: 1) the legality of land rights and contain physically Doña Bárbara's corruption from spreading; 2) a *quesera*, the symbol of economic order and progress in the *llano*; and 3) a road to the capital, that is, a physical route that will aid the influence of ideas from city to *llano*. The symbolic connection between Luzardo's individual journey and Venezuela's political state under Gómez constitutes the national allegory, one so popular that it was soon incorporated into the national curriculum. Reaching past its borders, *Doña Bárbara* sought to be the "great (Latin) American novel," one that would not only unearth the continent's problems but offer solutions. *Doña Bárbara*'s popularity throughout Latin America indicated the universality of its message. It soon became the subject of numerous adaptations throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.

Versions of the Myth

***Doña Bárbara* (1943) and Mexico's Golden Age of Cinema**

Gallegos always intended for *Doña Bárbara* to be made into a film but was unable to raise funding for it. Gallegos' dream was realized when Mexican director Fernando de Fuentes (1894-1958) accepted the project and made the full-length feature that was released in 1943, amidst the Mexican Golden Age of Cinema industry's boom

between 1936-69. Gallegos played an important role in the film adaptation, acting as co-screenwriter,³⁹ proximity that made the film version strikingly similar to the novel and left little room for Fuentes' artistic license. Mexican starlet María Félix was chosen to play Doña Bárbara, reaching such fame from her depiction that thenceforth she became known as "*La Doña*." Like the novel, Fuentes' film was well-received by Latin American audiences and critics. Today it is considered one of the top Mexican films of all time.⁴⁰

Identical to the book, the film opens with the river voyage to *Altamira* of Santos Luzardo, whose interaction with the *bonguero*'s captain announces Doña Bárbara's legend. After this first scene, the narrator then introduces the audience to *La devoradora de hombres* in a sequence depicting her tumultuous past. The following scenes focus upon Doña Bárbara's dominant position vis-à-vis the other *llaneros*, specifically with Lorenzo Barquero, Marisela, Juan Primito, and Don Balbino, before returning the focus back to Luzardo. Upon arriving to *Altamira*, where Antonio Torrealba and the other peons welcome him with open arms, Luzardo learns of the *llano*'s dire situation. As a lawyer, he attempts to rectify the situation legally and amicably, but in a joint meeting with the judge, Doña Bárbara, and Mister Danger, Luzardo discovers the system's corruption. By this time, *La devoradora de hombres* has used her Baniba witchcraft to cast a spell on Luzardo, yet she soon develops romantic feelings for her enemy. Luzardo discovers Marisela and his cousin Lorenzo Barquero in *El palmar de la Chusmita*. Luzardo invites them to live at *Altamira* whereupon their transformations begin: Lorenzo from alcoholism and Marisela from her unkemptness. Doña Bárbara complies ultimately

³⁹ This is announced in the opening slides: "Basada en la obra maestra de la literatura americana contemporánea, original del famoso novelista venezolano" (00:00:37) and "Adaptación cinematográfica y diálogo de Rómulo Gallegos" (00:01:23).

⁴⁰ In 1994, the Mexican magazine *Somos* published an article in which 25 film critics identified the top 100 Mexican films from all time. *Doña Bárbara* (1943) was 75th on the list.

with Luzardo's request to settle the land dispute legally and they meet on the *llano* to build a fence between both properties. Furthermore, Doña Bárbara reverses her curse on Luzardo, but an altercation ensues when Marisela learns of the initial curse and confronts her mother, to Luzardo's intervention. Doña Bárbara then decides to curse Luzardo again, but her conscience itself intervenes (in the form of a voiceover).⁴¹ In the end, she releases her land to Marisela and leaves the *llano* for good. The final scene is a low-angle shot of Marisela, its rightful owner, and Luzardo embracing each other and looking out onto the *llano*, indicating their happiness ever after.

As mentioned, the film follows Gallegos' original story identically. Although a film adaptation is not always able to convey an original work in its entirety, Fuentes did achieve a loyal interpretation of Gallegos novel through strategic cinematographic decisions. To begin with, Fuentes creates layers of symbolic images that transmit the civilization/barbarity binary. One poignant example is the film's first scene, in which Luzardo travels to *Altamira*. Here, Fuentes' designed a *mise-en-scene* that represented visually Venezuela's race and socioeconomic relations during the 1920s. The symbolism in this opening scene is therefore essential to understand the film's "civilization versus barbarity" argument as it asserts Luzardo as the dominant elite figure charged with bringing progress to the *llano*. Thus, in the scene Luzardo is positioned in front of the *mestizo* captain while the two indigenous pole-pushers move up and down the *bonguero* edges. Although we see both men seated at the same height, Luzardo, a *criollo*, sits in a dominant position in front of the captain, a *mestizo*. That is, Luzardo chooses in the most shaded and comfortable position whether or not to engage with the captain. Their

⁴¹ Don Balbino and Juan Primito, the other characters who live at *El Miedo*, believe she is talking to *El Socio*.

clothing also indicates socioeconomic differences: Luzardo wears an excessive amount of clothing, given the heat⁴²; the captain on the other hand wears slightly less⁴³; and the Amerindian less even.⁴⁴ The *bongo*'s physical dynamic, therefore, constitutes a metaphor for Latin America's socioeconomic and racial divisions: the white *élite*'s abundance, the Amerindian's shortage, and the *mestizo* in-betweeness. This is evident further in their interactions. In line with Gallegos' concept of progress, the educated *élite* provides the ideas (deciding the boat's direction) while the *mestizo* and indigenous groups provide the man-power (rowing the boat towards its destination). The opening scene is just one of many that demonstrate Fuentes' attention to symbolism. Further in the film he manipulates María Félix's physical positioning vis-à-vis other key characters,⁴⁵ which effectively highlights the elements that Gallegos deemed civilized/good/right versus barbaric/evil/wrong. In a dominant position, María Félix in most scenes therefore towers over Lorenzo Barquero, Juan Primito and Marisela, but remains throughout at equal height with Mister Danger and Luzardo.

Aside from portraying successfully the novel's overarching theme of civilization and barbarity, Fuentes also brought to life its beloved protagonist. A film's opening sequence is essential for setting the tone, drawing in the viewer, and providing pertinent information. Fuentes' film therefore opens with Doña Bárbara's legend, beginning with her formation as *La devoradora de hombres*. It is a story filled with mystery, action, and heartache. The audience cannot help but be drawn to its female protagonist, an immediacy that becomes necessary in order to accommodate the film's relatively short

⁴² Luzardo wears slacks, a shirt, a tie, a blazer, and riding boots.

⁴³ The captain wears a T-shirt tucked into stained white pants, rolled up to just below the knee, wears a bandana around his neck, and appears to be barefoot.

⁴⁴ The pole-pushers are indigenous and wear only shorts and a hat; they are barefoot.

⁴⁵ This positioning occurs primarily with Lorenzo Barquero, Juan Primito, and Marisela.

length, since it would have been impossible to include all of the novel's themes and retain interest in the film's action. The film's eventual box-office success is due in large part to María Félix's performance, her dramatic expression of Doña Bárbara's emotional. Indeed, Félix received such acclaim for this role that she was known henceforth as "*La Doña*." As critic Andrew Grant Wood has pointed out, "*Doña Bárbara* earned unprecedented box office receipts as well as significant praise for director Fernando de Fuentes and his young star. As audiences became enamored with María's magnetic appearance and powerful persona, her celebrity status increased significantly" (133).

Upon examining different versions of a given myth, it is helpful to study the ways in which such versions differ. As a clear metaphor for the imperfectly modern Latin American society projected in Gallegos' novel, Fuentes' film built upon Doña Bárbara's original image. Gallegos' original intention was to create a cultural myth that explained Venezuela's reality and his close contact with the film's production ensured this intent. In both Gallegos' and Fuentes' versions, Doña Bárbara's and Luzardo's binary opposition represent, respectively, the continent's historic corruption and the intelligence needed to overcome it. While the popularity of Gallegos' novel extended the metaphor throughout Latin America, Fuentes' film allowed an even larger spread. Audiences delighted in seeing first-hand Gallegos' figures on the big screen. Furthermore, the film's focus upon civilization versus barbarity seemed appropriate, given its release during World War II (1939-45). And yet, perhaps most importantly, the film's popularity only reinforced the cultural myth's marketability, and was the first of many throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. These later versions, however, in fact depart from Gallegos' original intent and, subsequently, critique several aspects of the myth.

Betty Kaplan's *Doña Bárbara* (1998): Evolution of a *Femme Fatale*

Despite the success of Fernando de Fuentes' film adaptation, Gallegos' *femme fatale* did not return to the big screen until Venezuelan-American director Betty Kaplan's contemporary adaptation *Doña Bárbara* (1998). Like Fuentes' version, Kaplan's follows Gallegos' original, adding only a few alterations. It opens with Santos Luzardo and a friend in a barber shop, while Luzardo prepares for his trip to *Altamira* and explains how he plans to sell the estate so that he can travel to Europe and marry his fiancée.⁴⁶ As in previous versions, he therefore embarks on the voyage to the *llano* to learn soon of Doña Bárbara's legend. *La devoradora de hombres*, too, herself learns of Luzardo's visit even before he arrives, and she welcomes the challenge. Upon arrival, Luzardo meets with Antonio Sandoval and the other peons and also meets Don Balbino Paiba, the hacienda's foreman and Doña Bárbara's current lover. Luzardo then visits his cousin Lorenzo Barquero at *El palmar de la Chusmita* and takes in Marisela for her makeover. After an unproductive meeting with Doña Bárbara, Luzardo attempts to end the land dispute legally, yet receives no relief from the ineffective legal system. At this point, Doña Bárbara falls for Luzardo and agrees to cooperate with him by rounding up the cattle for redistribution. At the roundup, *La devoradora de hombres* wears a see-through top, tempting Luzardo further. In the next sequence, Luzardo appears at her hacienda, a sexual scene follows, but Luzardo stops the interaction and flees, thus infuriating Doña Bárbara who proceeds to cast an indigenous spell on him.

In order to provide *Altamira* with enough money to build a fence around the property, Luzardo's peons begin gathering feathers to sell in Caracas. Doña Bárbara

⁴⁶ The fiancée is an addition, perhaps meant to provide a better backstory and/or to give Luzardo's character more depth. It is unclear whether Kaplan was familiar with Gallegos' *La Coronela* (1928), in which Luzardo originally had a fiancée.

instructs Melquíades to kill Luzardo's peons as they transport the feathers and steal them. During the violent interaction, Luzardo kills Melquíades in self-defense. Upon hearing of Melquíades' death, Doña Bárbara is overcome with rage and sets out to kill Luzardo, while an ailing Lorenzo Barquero is on his deathbed surrounded by Marisela and Luzardo at *El palmar de la Chusmita*. Doña Bárbara takes aim at Luzardo through the window, and yet is overcome with emotion as she flashes back to Astrúbal's, her former lover's, death on the *bonguero*. She spares Luzardo's life and flees to *El Miedo*, where she destroys her religious altar. In the end, she relinquishes her land to Marisela and leaves the *llano* herself on a bongo.

As opposed to Fuentes' film, Kaplan's period piece shot in Argentina attempts not only to portray Gallegos civilization/barbarity theme, it also appears to supply a political critique lost in Fuentes' earlier version. For this reason, Kaplan returns the focus to Gallegos' original critique of the Gómez regime; indeed, throughout the film Gómez's portrait reappears strategically in order to emphasize historical context, particularly in those scenes that depict the government's ineffectiveness.⁴⁷ It is unknown, however, whether these references are recognizable to contemporary audiences, or if the story connects to further that historical context.

Despite thematic similarities to Gallegos' novel and Fuentes' adaptation, Kaplan does not adapt the myth's original symbol to a contemporary context. She does, however, emphasize Doña Bárbara's sexuality, one aspect of the *femme fatale* that did reflect

⁴⁷ Kaplan's version contains only one explicit reference to Gómez's dictatorship. In the film's first scene, Luzardo is in a barbershop. A group of protestors pass by the barbershop window chanting, "¡Abajo Gómez! ¡Abajo el dictador! ¡Fuera Gómez! ¡Basta, basta, basta! (00:02:49-55). It is clear that Venezuela's problems are the direct result of Gómez' dictatorship, hence why Luzardo and his fiancée's family choose to reside in the more "civilized" Europe. As Luzardo explains, "Estoy harto de políticos y de dictadura. ¡Quiero irme a Europa ya!" (00:10:31-27).

society's evolved perception of the female. That is to say, female sexuality was no longer something to fear; rather, it was a source of feminine empowerment. As a woman, Kaplan was in the unique position of presenting the Doña Bárbara myth from a feminist perspective. The decision to emphasize the protagonist's sexual nature may well be a critique of the myth. It is intriguing, however, why Kaplan decided to eliminate all references to Doña Bárbara's rape, a pivotal event in the *femme fatale*'s life that explains her eventual malevolence. Yet given the one reference to Asdrúbal towards the end of the film, a traumatic moment that parallels a reference to Luzardo's own family tragedy, it can be assumed that Kaplan intended to present Doña Bárbara as having suffered equally as her male counterpart. This, of course, constitutes a departure as we assume in previous versions that Doña Bárbara suffers a trauma greater than Luzardo's. Indeed, Kaplan may have also eliminated Doña Bárbara's rape because, simply put, a sexual violation signals female weakness. Therefore, from a feminist standpoint, the elimination of the rape scene would eliminate inequality between genders.

Despite a definitive transition in this version of Doña Bárbara then, it cannot be said that Kaplan's artistic decisions are completely successful. Indeed, she creates a kitschy, marketable product of the *femme fatale* that captivates the audience's interest by constructing a new, hypersexual version. And yet, Kaplan's film is the first time Doña Bárbara appears as an incomplete character, thus explaining why the film was a box office flop. In any event, the revamped Doña Bárbara myth did become eventually a marketable product, and Telemundo took note. As Walter Bruno Berg has noted, the film is "un mundo de imágenes multicolores, turísticamente arregladas, características de la

visión auto-exótica propia de la *telenovela*” (132), perhaps explaining the next (and most successful) contemporary adaptation, this time on the small screen.

The *Doña Bárbara Telenovelas*: 1968, 1972, 2008

The first *Doña Bárbara telenovela* was produced by Venevisión in 1967 and ran for two seasons with Lupita Ferrer as its protagonist. By 1972, however, the Venezuelan government had begun censoring television, and the *Resolución 3.178* obligated the production of “cultural programs”: “Los programas más novelados de continuidad a transmitirse después de las 4:00 p.m. deberán ser de carácter cultural y podrán ser fraccionados hasta en ciento ochenta (180) presentaciones o capítulos de hasta una hora de transmisión” (qtd. in Mendoza 32).⁴⁸ The term “cultural programs” referred to any work of art, literature, history, or science whose thematic merit contributed to the betterment of Venezuelan society.⁴⁹ In 1975, and under the same *Resolución 3.178*, Venezuelan production company Radio Caracas Televisión (RCTV) produced another *Doña Bárbara* adaptation that became so popular it was the first *telenovela* imported to Europe (Mendoza 33). It was also one of the first *telenovelas* shot in color and outdoors. Marina Baura played the lead and bore a striking resemblance to María Félix.

Television has only recently become the subject of media analysis, with particular interest in *telenovelas* and their U.S. counterpart, soap operas. However, the greatest

⁴⁸ Apart from the obligation to produce “cultural programs,” the *Resolución 3.178* established limits on program durations, series lengths, and implemented the following strict schedule: programs strictly for children from 4-6 p.m.; adolescents from 6-7 p.m.; all ages from 5 a.m.- 4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.; and only adults after 9 p.m. (Mendoza 31). In addition, the *Resolución* established censorship of all *telenovelas*: “Las relaciones del hombre en la sociedad se presentarán enalteciendo las labores del trabajo y la observación de las leyes y las buenas costumbres; la aplicación de la justicia presidirá el tema principal y será la solución de la trama” (qtd. in Mendoza 32).

⁴⁹ “...se entiende la transmisión de obras de arte, de la literatura, de la historia y de la ciencia, así como la transmisión de biografías y pasajes históricos, los recitales y otras obras y programas que por la calidad de sus intérpretes, la significación de sus temas o el mérito artístico de la realización, contribuyan a elevar el nivel de la colectividad” (qtd. in Mendoza 32).

obstacle to interpreting this medium is the inability to define it. Television studies rely heavily on theories from other visual mediums, particularly theater and film, which fail to encompass its unique elements. To begin with, television shows depend almost solely on audience feedback. A show is often cancelled early on or moved to a different time slot if ratings are low. Second, in contrast to a film or play, a television serial has a “live” storyline that is seemingly never-ending; audience members become more concerned with *how* the story develops towards an often-predictable outcome, as opposed to the ending itself (González 69). Last, much like a film or play, television serials are both visual and textual. And yet, the show’s text (script) adjusts regularly to audience feedback as it is developed simultaneously with the program’s showing. For this reason, the sheer volume of a text for a popular decades-long serial would complicate any textual analysis. It is debatable whether television categories should be considered “genres,” for in many ways they resist such categorization. As Laura Stempel Mumford explains, “[television’s] fluid formats...have borders far too permeable to fix into anything that resembles genres from the past...television categories are too changeable to anchor anything as stable as genre definition...” (7). And yet, the life of a TV series relies on audience recognition of traditional genres (as in film) and this pushes production companies to create identifiable characteristics not only for individual series, but for time slots as well.⁵⁰ This is particularly evident in the *telenovela* subset.⁵¹ Stempel Mumford’s

⁵⁰ Laura Stempel Mumford notes that critically-acclaimed shows such as *Twin Peaks* were cancelled precisely because the audience was unable to recognize its genre and, therefore, lost interest quickly: “Its initial popularity can probably be attributed to the combined effects of co-creator David Lynch’s cult status and the fact that the program’s challenges to television conventions—its overt expressions of sexuality and violence, black comedy, allusions to film culture, and so on—seemed at first to take place within a format that mixed the already popular genres of the prime-time serial and the crime/mystery series. Ultimately, however, *Peaks*’ loss of audience and both critics’ and viewers’ intense alienation from the series can, I think, be traced directly to the fact that the audience found it nearly impossible to continue to understand the show in terms of recognizable genres” (8).

extensive research offers its arguably most comprehensive definition: “A soap opera [or *telenovela*] is a continuing fictional dramatic television program, presented in multiple serial installments each week, through a narrative composed of interlocking storylines that focus upon the relationships within a specific community of characters” (6).

Since Kaplan’s version, Gallegos’ story was not to be produced again on the small screen until the U.S.-based Telemundo series *Doña Bárbara* (2008-9), the focus of this thesis. As opposed to U.S. soap operas, which have unlimited runs, a *telenovela* from Latin America tends to run for only a few years, despite its popularity. This new *Doña Bárbara* aired for only two seasons and was an immediate success in Latin America, the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East. Today, it continues to run in syndication on the network, as well as online.

Consistent with Stempel Mumford’s definition and the traditional *telenovela* model, the program’s 191 episodes centered on the love triangle between Doña Bárbara, Marisela, and Santos Luzardo. However, this triangle also branched off into a series of relationships, trysts, and deceptions among the plethora of characters who inhabit *Altamira*’s fictional world. Although the core of Gallegos’ original story remained intact,⁵¹ the majority of the characters were additions. Important characters such as Mister Danger and Melquíades played minor roles, whereas the new characters Eustaquia—Doña Bárbara’s Amerindian confidante and mother-figure—and Cecilia—Santos Luzardo’s

⁵¹ In the United States, the soap opera is recognized as a multi-episodic daytime program targeted to a primarily female audience. Naturally, there are several flaws to this reductionist approach. For instance, the popular U.S. show *Dallas* pushed the boundaries of this definition, creating a new “primetime soap opera” subset similar to Latin American and Spanish *telenovelas*. Furthermore, statistics indicate that while still predominately female, there is a growing male audience.

⁵² The first episode is the only one that adheres strictly to the original story; after that, artistic license takes over.

fiancée—now played integral roles.⁵³ Because the series focused upon a love triangle, Doña Bárbara and Luzardo entered into a physical relationship that was plagued by break-ups and reconciliations. However, Doña Bárbara's lust for revenge was not only directed at Luzardo and Marisela, but at her five rapists. When Luzardo first broke her heart (one of many times), she channeled her revenge into finding each of the five men and torturing or killing them. Ultimately, Doña Bárbara's lust for revenge drove her from the *llano*, allowing Marisela and Luzardo to marry and start a family. In the series' final moments, Marisela and Luzardo clutch their infant child and together forgive Bárbara for her wrongdoings. Next, in a dream-like sequence, Bárbara mounts a boat with the deceased Eustaquia and Melquíades to seemingly sail off into the afterlife. However, Melquíades reminds Doña Bárbara (and the viewer), "Usted no puede morir, porque las leyendas como usted, mi doña, se quedan en el corazón y el alma de la gente...para siempre" (39:49 – 40:00).

Telemundo's version of Doña Bárbara, played by Mexican actress Esther González, is motivated by lust and rage and her sexuality is the sole source of her power. However, the added elements of Barbarita's rapists and her insistence on being called by her full name, Doña Bárbara Guaimarán⁵⁴—an invented surname—separate this version completely from previous ones. This departure, as in Kaplan's film, becomes a commentary on the myth. Valentina Párraga, the screenwriter of this adaptation, like Kaplan, had the opportunity to present the Doña Bárbara myth from a feminine

⁵³ Eustaquia is an adaptation of Gallegos' male character Eustaquio, the Amerindian who saves Doña Bárbara after her rape; Cecilia is an adaptation of Santos Luzardo's fiancée in Kaplan's film version (or perhaps Luisana in Gallegos' *La Coronela*).

⁵⁴ The inclusion of an indigenous last name enables the contemporary Doña Bárbara to be easily separated from the previous ones. It also creates a direct allusion to her indigenous heritage, since her use of *brujería* is virtually nonexistent in the series.

perspective. One characteristic of the *telenovela*'s melodramatic techniques is the externalization of the internal world.⁵⁵ While such externalization is common throughout the genre, it was perhaps also a commentary on the myth, whereby much of Doña Bárbara's internal world remains a mystery. Indeed, by developing this character fully, by exposing her internal world and exploring her psyche, seeing her fall in love with Luzardo, reconciling with her daughter, and taking revenge on her rapists, the barrier between the audience and Doña Bárbara, present in previous versions, is eliminated. The *telenovela* takes this even further in the series finale by explaining to the audience what happens ultimately to Doña Bárbara at the end of the narrative, yet another possible critique of the other versions of the myth. Much like the Don Quixote of the *Segunda Parte*, Doña Bárbara Guaimarán is self-aware of her mythic evolution throughout the years, reminding those around her that she is not just anyone—she is “*La Doña Bárbara*.” Thus, this is also the first version of Doña Bárbara that self-consciously addresses the myth.

As in Kaplan's film, *Telemundo*'s version does not go without critique. Here, the *telenovela* becomes so engrossed in the *femme fatale*'s absurd reality that her actions are pushed to the point of absurdity.⁵⁶ Shock value is another typical characteristic of *telenovelas*: their goal is not the show's ending, but *how* the story develops towards a predictable outcome. *Doña Bárbara*'s literary fame throughout the Hispanic world prepared even novice viewers for the series' finale: Luzardo's triumph and her demise.

⁵⁵ As Stempel Mumford has noted: “the externalization of internal conflicts, the perpetuation of the myth of the total legibility of meaning, an intense concern with gender, and the way that framing a story in exclusively personal terms allows the framer to evade its ideological implications” (10).

⁵⁶ One of the most bizarre moments, perhaps, is when Doña Bárbara orchestrates a plan to kill Cecilia during her wedding to Luzardo by having Melquíades shoot a poisonous dart at her from the shadows. Bárbara disguises herself as a sexy nun and sneaks into the church, only to see her plan foiled as Cecilia's lover stops the wedding and the bride then mysteriously collapses (episodes 39-40).

For this reason, only the first episode adheres strictly to the novel as a means of backstory. From this point on, artistic license takes over. This Doña Bárbara, like Kaplan's, was a sellable product. The show's success solidified a recipe for marketing this myth. It becomes no surprise, then, that Telemundo will be releasing a new *Doña Bárbara* in 2016, yet another adaptation of *La devoradora de hombres*.

The *Doña Bárbara* Myth

Doña Bárbara is unquestionably one of the most popular myths in Latin America. The significant number of versions leads one to inquire why this figure, as opposed to others, has drawn so much attention. Her embedding in collective memory and perpetual re-imagination suggests that she is a popular cultural myth that continued to influence contemporary audiences long after her original appearance. Claude Lévi-Strauss' analysis of myth revealed that identifying a myth's basic, unwavering elements, which he called "mythemes," were essential to understanding its meaning, which suggests further that the Doña Bárbara myth entailed a universal language assembled by mythemes that in turn could be reimagined and adapted for different contexts.

Lévi-Strauss noted that one could see a myth's totality and, thus, identify its core connotation(s) by combining all of its pieces. This process becomes helpful when examining the Doña Bárbara myth. In combining the versions discussed here, therefore, its mythemes could be thus organized: 1) a young Doña Bárbara is raped, 2) the rape catalyzes a transformation into *La devoradora de hombres*, 3) a mature Doña Bárbara lures Lorenzo Barquero and the two have a child, Marisela, 4) the same mature Doña Bárbara abandons Barquero and Marisela, 5) Doña Bárbara corrupts the legal system to usurp his land and parts of *Altamira*, including the cattle, 6) Santos Luzardo, civilization,

travels on a *bongo* to the *llano* in order to defeat a “barbarous” Doña Bárbara, 7) Luzardo takes in Marisela and Barquero in order to defeat their own barbarity, 8) Doña Bárbara uses black magic to curse Luzardo, yet develops romantic feelings towards him, 9) Luzardo faces his own demons—a deadly family feud—before defeating Doña Bárbara, 10) Marisela and Luzardo fall in love and in the end, Luzardo’s actions drive Doña Bárbara to acknowledge her own “barbarity” and to abandon the *llano*.

Versions may vary, but the ten mytheme structure is the recurring narrative backbone of all. And yet, in order to identify the myth’s underlying connotation, this narrative structure can be broken down further into sub-mythemes. The most salient sub-mytheme is the struggle between the various binaries at work, particularly the civilization/barbarity struggle, followed by Doña Bárbara herself, whose nickname *La devoradora de hombres* incites her *femme fatale* status. In essence, Doña Bárbara symbolizes both the dangers of female sexuality and the conflict of pain and pleasure. Other sub-mythemes include: 1) Luzardo’s voyage to *Altamira*, or the hero’s journey; 2) Doña Bárbara and Marisela’s mother-daughter relationship; and 3) Marisela’s transformation. Examining these sub-mythemes further and the ways in which they recur in the versions, reveals the Doña Bárbara myth’s underlying connotation and its resulting commodification.

The Monomyth, or the Hero’s Journey

One element present in all versions of the Doña Bárbara myth is Luzardo’s voyage to *Altamira*. In each and every version a *bongo*—or small riverboat—carries one or two passengers down Venezuela’s Río Arauca.⁵⁷ The brutal sun beats down as two

⁵⁷ Gallegos’ novel, Kaplan’s film, and the *telenovela* carry two passengers: Santos Luzardo and Melquíades. Fuentes’ film, for unclear reasons, omits Melquíades from this scene.

pole men propel the boat slowly through caiman-infested waters. In every version (except Fuentes'), two unfamiliar *bongo* passengers appear. Suspense builds up as one passenger (Santos Luzardo) discovers that the other is following him. To complicate matters, Luzardo believes that this “*desconocido*” is one of Doña Bárbara’s peons.⁵⁸ As soon as the *bongo* lands on shore, the passengers and crew rest on the riverbank. Here, the boat captain warns Luzardo that the “*desconocido*” may well be *El Brujeador*—Doña Bárbara’s confidant—whose name alludes to both his occupation as horse-whisperer and *brujo*—witch-man. At the end of the scene, the crew and passengers get back on the *bongo* only to discover they are one passenger short—*El Brujeador* has disappeared into the brush. It is unclear why Fuentes edited out the second passenger from his version, but it can be assumed it was due to time constraints. Nevertheless, his version of this scene does allude to the same dangers presented visually in the others.

The opening scene reminds us of the classical myth Acheron/Styx—the dead’s voyage across the river that separates the mortal realm from the underworld. Charon would ferry the deceased across the river(s) and bodies were often buried with coins in order to pay for the voyage. This is the opening scene that recurs in each Doña Bárbara version. The action there prepares the audience for an important internal voyage that Luzardo will embark on: the hero’s journey. It also sets up the nature of the journey—potentially destructive for the hero, and an association with evil. Melquíades (*El Brujeador*) represents physically Doña Bárbara’s malevolence. In other words, he foreshadows Doña Bárbara as her agent. Mythically, evil (Satan) works through emissaries (demons), minions. All versions thus announce Doña Bárbara’s malice in a

⁵⁸ In Gallegos novel, Luzardo exclaims: “¿Qué se propondrá este individuo? Para tenderme una celada, si es que a eso lo han mandado, ya se le han presentado oportunidades. Porque juraría que éste pertenece a la pandilla de El Miedo. Ya vamos a saberlo” (9).

verbal exchange between the captain and Luzardo, and allow the first mytheme to be a confrontation between the hero and the villain's emissary.

The elements Luzardo encounters during his voyage hint further about the mythical descent into Hades: he travels on a boat to an unknown destination (perhaps death). Dangers are present (Melquíades and Doña Bárbara), and the boat's captain is all-knowing. Typical of mythic heroes, Luzardo is young and educated. His journey recalls Joseph Campbell's "monomyth," mythemes related to rites of passage—separation, initiation, and return: "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder (x): fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won (y): the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man (z)" (23).

During the voyage, Luzardo proves to be young and strong, a requisite for surviving the journey.⁵⁹ He is also quick-minded, identifying easily the *desconocido*.⁶⁰ All this is absent in Fuentes' version, a lack of character development which explains why Julián Soler's performance was not praised critically in the way María Félix's was. Finally, Luzardo is brave, as seen when he clears the caimans—also Doña Bárbara's emissaries—from the shore.⁶¹ All such heroic qualities are established here in order to manipulate the audience's predisposition against the antagonist—Doña Bárbara and her emissaries both human (Melquíades) and animal (caimans). The reader/viewer learns that the realm into which the hero wanders is dangerous, cruel, destructive, and evil, all

⁵⁹ "Bajo la toldilla, un joven a quien la contextura vigorosa, sin ser atlética, y las facciones enérgicas y expresivas prestaban gallardía casi altanera" (Gallegos 7).

⁶⁰ "Santos Luzardo vuelve rápidamente la cabeza. Olvidado ya de que tal hombre iba en el bongo, ha reconocido ahora, de pronto, aquella voz singular..." (Gallegos 8).

⁶¹ "¡Aguaita! Usted que quería tirar caimanes. Mire cómo están en aquella punta de playa. Otra vez apareció en el rostro de Luzardo la sonrisa de inteligencia de la situación, y, poniéndose de pie, se echó a la cara un rifle que llevaba consigo. Pero la bala no dio en el blanco, y los enormes saurios se precipitaron al agua, levantando un hervor de espumas" (Gallegos 10).

qualities used to juxtapose with Luzardo's good nature.

Thus, Doña Bárbara, much like Persephone, Medusa, Medea, and Sycorax, rules over a "supernatural world" that Luzardo (the hero) travels to. Each version of the myth also connects this female figure to natural elements, specifically water. Both Gallegos' novel and Fuentes' film even summon her directly with what André S. Michalski described as a "triple repetición de unas palabras cabalísticas, propias de una leyenda o de un cuento de hadas..." (1015): "¡De más allá del Cunaviche, de más allá del Cinaruco, de más allá del Meta!" (Gallegos 21).⁶² Doña Bárbara thus emerges from the waters deep in the Amazon jungle. Significantly, her daughter's name is Marisela, a variation of the Latin "Marissa" which means "of the water." Furthermore, her death/disappearance at the end of the narrative is attached to water in all versions except Fuentes'. In Gallegos' novel, Doña Bárbara's final scene takes place on the Río Orinoco's riverbanks and it is unclear whether she commits suicide or merely returns to the jungle.⁶³ In Kaplan's version, Doña Bárbara leaves the *llano* on a *bongo* to an undisclosed location. In the *telenovela*, she embarks a *bongo* with Melquíades and Eustaquia, who take her to the immortal realm. In each version, this final water imagery represents not only a cycle in

⁶² This quotation references three rivers that stem from the Río Orinoco, Venezuela's most prominent body of water. The Río Orinoco is one of South America's longest rivers which, in Venezuela, runs 1,330 miles along the border between Venezuela and Colombia before flowing northeast into the Atlantic Ocean. Each river listed is increasingly further south of Caracas—moving ever further away from civilization. The Río Meta lies at the base of the Amazon rainforest, an unknown world to the typical Venezuelan reader. In fact, the Amazon has been a mysterious (and mythical) space since Colonial expeditions and even today, several species of plants and animals, as well as groups of Amerindians, remain unknown. National Geographic has released several articles in the last decade that state there are as many as 84 known tribes living in extreme isolation in Amerindian Brazil and up to 15 in Peru. Their survival, physical and cultural, is increasingly endangered by deforestation and capitalism. See Scott Wallace's "New Photos of Uncontacted Amazon Tribe Stir Uproar" (April 2014) and "Last of the Amazon" (January 2007), and Barbara Zimmerman's "Rain Forest Warriors: How Indigenous Tribes Protect the Amazon" (December 2013).

⁶³ The only information provided is that "La noticia corre de boca en boca: ha desaparecido la cacica del Arauca" (Gallegos 242). In this scene on the riverbanks, however, Doña Bárbara does witness a cow being devoured slowly by an anaconda—a possible metaphor for her own demise.

the story, but Doña Bárbara's return to her origin. Fuentes' film—the outlier—ends abruptly, and the narrator states merely that she has abandoned the *llano*.

Yet a second important element of Doña Bárbara's link to the supernatural is her use of black magic. In Gallegos' and Fuentes' versions, Doña Bárbara has a close relationship with the supernatural realm. She converses regularly with *El Socio*—or “The Partner”—the myth's version of Satan. In all versions, she learns black magic while recuperating with an indigenous tribe after her rape, and then places a spell on Luzardo as soon as he arrives. In Kaplan's version, there is also an attempt to make more explicit the connection between indigenous heritage and evil by using an Amerindian musical score whenever we see Doña Bárbara practicing *brujería*. Telemundo's own version added the character Eustaquia—a feminized version of Gallegos' Eustaquio—, a Baniba woman who is Doña Bárbara's mother-figure and “conscience,” whenever we see Doña Bárbara turning to *brujería*. Melquíades is of course another important character—he is the emissary of Doña Bárbara's “barbarity” who in most versions welcomes Luzardo at the outset of his voyage. He also happens to be a Baniba indian who carries out Doña Bárbara's wishes whenever the rest of the *llaneros* suspect she is speaking with *El Socio*. Finally, all versions depict Doña Bárbara's hold over the supernatural world through her connection to animals. These include, in all versions, not only the caimans who accompany the river voyage, but also *rebullones* in Gallegos' and Fuentes' versions, a single wild mare in Kaplan's, and the mythical caiman *El Bramador*.

As each version of the myth infuses Luzardo with heroic qualities, so does Doña Bárbara's mythical, malevolent features become vital elements that juxtapose hero and villain. Doña Bárbara's connection to the (super)natural world enables her to maintain

power over the *llaneros* until Luzardo—their hero—shows up. In each version, her ultimate demise occurs through Luzardo’s attacks upon each of the aforementioned elements: her avatars (human and animal), connections to natural elements, and black magic. Luzardo, for example, plans to build a road to Caracas, thus diminishing the Río Arauca’s (water’s) vital role in transportation. He also debunks Doña Bárbara’s black-arts hold on animals: he tames the wild stallion and kills *El Bramador*. As summarized by Campbell, the “monomyth” is built upon the mythemes of departure, initiation, and return, a narrative by stages that structures presence across geographical and temporal spaces that underscore its universality. Indeed, the three stages—departure, initiation, return—are all present within the Doña Bárbara myth: Luzardo departs from Caracas and heads into unknown territory (departure); he faces and ultimately defeats Doña Bárbara—the threat (initiation); and although Luzardo never does return to Caracas, by the end of the myth (return) he does return *Altamira* to its original state—his original home.

Mythemes, then, are essential to understanding a myth’s meaning system. In the case of the monomyth, the hero’s physical voyage symbolizes the internal or spiritual voyages that are usually dramatized as a psychological transformation. Typical of the hero’s journey, Luzardo (the hero) travels to *Altamira* in order to defeat Doña Bárbara (the villain). Doña Bárbara, however, is merely a physical representation of the barbarity within Luzardo himself. Indeed, the internal voyage of all Gallegos’ main characters has been studied in psychoanalyst Raul Ramos Calles’ *Los personajes de Gallegos a través del psicoanálisis* (1969), which here takes a deeper look at the relationships between Doña Bárbara, Luzardo, and Barquero. Adding to this study, and returning focus to Barquero’s journey as depicted in all versions of the myth, the deadly exchange between

Luzardo's and Lorenzo Barquero's fathers, the result of a long-running feud, is a constant reminder that barbarity runs through their blood as well. This issue explains Barquero's own pivotal role in the myth: he represents the result of barbarity taking over; he was potentially heroic, but is now defeated. That is, Barquero is Luzardo's secondary foil. As Luzardo defeats Doña Bárbara—symbol of barbarity—he confronts and defeats his own barbaric nature along the way, the same that had defected Barquero. Subsequently, Doña Bárbara is the only one able to provoke his barbaric side, ensuing rage and lust.⁶⁴ In each instance, Luzardo must use his willpower in order to thwart off Doña Bárbara's advances, sexual or other. While Gallegos' version develops the sexual tension gradually between these two characters, this varies according to the version. In Fuentes' film, for instance, Luzardo and Doña Bárbara's brief interaction in the round-up is the single moment of sexual tension. In Kaplan's film and the *telenovela*, however, Luzardo and Doña Bárbara engage physically. In all versions, however, Luzardo must recognize his internal barbarity in order to overcome it, and this instant occurs when he kills Melquíades in self-defense. At that moment, he identifies with his father, yet must overcome this by separating himself, thus killing his father metaphorically.

Indeed, Luzardo's journey is also essential in order to overcome the latent trauma of his father's death. Recall that in Gallegos' version, after Luzardo witnesses his father and brother's deadly quarrel, his mother moves them to Caracas as a way of escaping the

⁶⁴ In the novel, Luzardo accepts this internal barbarism when he kills Doña Bárbara's peon in self-defense: "Por fin y por encima de su voluntad empezaba a realizarse aquel presentimiento de una intempestiva regresión a la barbarie que atormentó su primera juventud. Todos los esfuerzos hechos por librarse de aquella amenaza que veía suspendida sobre su vida, por reprimir los impulsos de su sangre hacia las violentas ejecutorias de los Luzardos, que habían sido, todos, hombres fieros sin más ley que la bravura armada, y por adquirir, en cambio, la actitud propia del civilizado, en quien los instintos están subordinados a la disciplina de los principios, todo cuanto había sido obra ardua y tesonera de los mejores años de su vida desaparecía ahora arrollado por el temerario alarde de hombría que lo moviera a acudir a la celada de Rincón Hondo" (215).

traumatic event.⁶⁵ And yet, the family secret continues to haunt him. It is precisely for this reason that he decides to travel to *Altamira* in order to sell it off. In each version, the decision to sell the estate only perpetuates his mother's repression and inhibits him from overcoming the latent trauma. Thus, by dealing with the issues at *Altamira*, Luzardo in effect confronts his father's ghost, the trauma witnessed as a child. Further, in defeating Doña Bárbara, Luzardo defeats the internalized mother figure that, unconsciously, was created by the repression that was put in effect by removal from the violent scene.

Lorenzo Barquero is yet another important element of each version. When Luzardo confronts Barquero on *El palmar de la Chusmita*, he is in effect confronting his own past. This, however, is a secondary, or spectral, confrontation. The first, as we have noted, is his father; the second is Barquero; the final—and real—confrontation is Doña Bárbara, his internalized mother. Thus, Luzardo offers to help his cousin as a way to reconcile the destruction that was left in their fathers' wake. As Barquero's health improves, Luzardo's trauma attached to *Altamira* dissipates. Luzardo's decision not to sell *Altamira* represents his acknowledgement and acceptance of the trauma, nothing less than the first stage of what Freud called "working through," the process of overcoming trauma. The monomyth is allegorical in nature—the physical representing the internal. These myths are intended to be mimetic devices: in receiving the myth, one intends to identify the heroic qualities and assimilate them to one's life. Luzardo's journey, his defeat of Doña Bárbara, were intended to inspire the reader/viewer to civic action. In turn, they would incorporate the hero's qualities into their own struggle under barbaric hold, albeit from an outer force

⁶⁵ "Días después, doña Asunción abandonaba definitivamente el Llano para trasladarse a Caracas con Santos, único superviviente de la hecatombe. Quería salvarlo educándolo en otro medio, a centenares de leguas de aquellos trágicos sitios" (17-18).

(such as a dictatorship), or else an inner, personal one.

The Myth of Civilization and Barbarity

One question that arises with the Doña Bárbara myth in relation to Sarmiento's *Facundo* is why the Venezuelan plains region in particular should have been subject to mythification? The idea of the frontier has always fascinated humans, and mythifying the frontier has been an integral part of human history. Sarmiento's mythification of Argentina's vast *pampa* was not uncommon in the 19th century. The closest case in the U.S. was the American West. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented his paper "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" at an American Historical Association meeting in Chicago. Unbeknownst to its author, his ideas, referred today as the Turner Thesis or the Frontier Thesis, would impact upon American History significantly. Turner's thesis conveyed the notion of Manifest Destiny: "the existence of an area of free land, its continuing recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development" (qtd. in Kapell 19).⁶⁶ But, as Vernon E. Mattson has noted, Turner's representation of the American frontier converted it into a myth: "what Turner did for Americans was invest in the 'frontier' a powerful symbol for 'an idealized version of their past as well as their aspirations for the future'" (qtd. in Kapell 8). Turner's thesis was, in short, "an American *mythos* presented, through social scientific language, as though it was *logos*" (his emphasis, Kapell 8). The frontier became a foundation myth in U.S. culture, as demonstrated later by Wild West shows and Westerns.

⁶⁶ As Matthew Wilhelm Kapell has noted, "For Turner, then, it was an ever-expanding western frontier, continually opening before American Manifest Destiny, full of free land and opportunity that created the American way of life and allowed for the development of American individuality, freedom and democracy" (8).

While it is unclear whether Turner actually read Sarmiento's *Facundo*,⁶⁷ the latter's representation of the *pampa* did create an identical foundational myth in Argentina. The *pampa* was a vast, "barbaric" frontier that only "civilization" could rein in. Sarmiento believed that reason was the greatest arm in civilization's fight against barbarity, and this included importing ideas (and physical bodies) from Europe.⁶⁸ The city served as a breeding ground for new ideas harvested through educational reform that, in turn, would spread civilization. Sarmiento's presentation of the *pampa*, like Turner's thesis, was "an American *mythos* presented, through social scientific language, as though it was *logos*" (his emphasis, Kapell 8). This scientific presentation of the *pampa* infused it with characteristics that influenced Argentine culture and its perception of the region. And yet, Sarmiento essentially mythified two types of frontier: the physical one, as represented by the *pampa*; and the ideological one, as embodied in the country's barbaric government(s), like Rosas'. This second frontier interested Sarmiento most; Argentina was a space of potential—a frontier that European ideology and culture could civilize. All of this was solidified in the figure of Juan Facundo Quiroga; as a *gaucho*, he represented all of this individual's barbaric qualities influenced by *la naturaleza*; and as a metaphor for the Dictator Rosas, he represented all that was holding Argentina back from becoming a progressive state. Like the *pampa* and the *gaucho*, Quiroga became a myth of barbarity

⁶⁷ Mary Mann, a close friend of Sarmiento's, completed the first English translation of *Facundo* in 1868, just in time for his presidential campaign. In order to ensure his book would circulate among U.S. politicians, Sarmiento created an edition specifically for "U.S. government figures and political pundits" (Stavans xxviii).

⁶⁸ It should be noted that Sarmiento did not include Spain in his European idealization. In fact, he believed Spain was a prime example of how barbarity can take hold of a country: "Entonces se habría podido aclarar un poco el problema de la España, esa rezagada a la Europa, que, echada entre el Mediterráneo y el Océano, entre la Edad Media y el siglo XIX, unida a la Europa culta por un ancho istmo y separada del África bárbara por un angosto estrecho, está balanceándose entre dos fuerzas opuestas, ya levantándose en la balanza de los pueblos libres, ya cayendo en la de los despotizados; ya impía, ya fanática; ora constitucionalista declarada, ora despótica impudente; maldiciendo sus cadenas rotas a veces, ya cruzando los brazos, y pidiendo a gritos que le impongan el yugo, que parece ser su condición y su modo de existir" (10).

embedded within the Argentine collective memory. As Jorge Luis Borges once noted, Quiroga is “the most memorable character of [Argentine] literature” (qtd. in Stavans xxxii).⁶⁹

Examining Gallegos’ novel and its avatars, it becomes clear that *Doña Bárbara*, too, is a frontier myth of the Venezuelan *llano*, and that she is the most memorable character in Venezuela, if not Latin American Literature. As in Turner’s and Sarmiento’s case, at the myth’s core is the struggle between civilization and barbarity. Each version of the Doña Bárbara myth connects early on *La devoradora de hombres* and the *llano*. While this is evident in Doña Bárbara’s connection to nature, some versions convey this idea more explicitly, stating outrightly that she is a metaphor for the *llano*. For example, the first sequence of Fuentes’ film ends with a low-angle shot of Doña Bárbara mounted on a horse that overlays a sequence of *llano* scenes, a visual symbol of the metaphor she embodies. In order to reinforce this symbol, the camera closes in slowly upon Doña Bárbara transitioning to a medium shot as the voice-over proclaims, “Hoy, es la dueña de casi todo el cajón de la Arauca. Señora de vidas y haciendas, rebaños y sabanas, el llano la teme y la obedece, su hermosura fascina a los hombres y su oro compra leyes que la protegen y paga manos que por ella matan. Doña Bárbara. La temible Doña Bárbara” (00:06:15-38). Both Kaplan’s and Fuentes’s versions emphasize Doña Bárbara’s connection to the land in the exchange between Luzardo and Lorenzo Barquero. In Fuentes’ version, Luzardo visits his cousin for the first time and Barquero exclaims, in

⁶⁹ It should also be noted that Sarmiento became somewhat of a mythic figure in Argentina as well. As Stavans has noted, “To this day, Argentina celebrates its Teacher’s Day on September 11, the day of Sarmiento’s death. In schools across the nation, children sing the ‘*Himno de Sarmiento*,’ recalling his struggle ‘with the pen, with the sword, with the word.’ His legacy is ubiquitous: his picture hangs in bureaucratic offices and is framed in stamps, paper currency, tourism advertisements, and on the covers of the scores of reprints of *Facundo*” (xxxi-ii).

clear reference to Doña Bárbara: “Esta tierra no perdona, te envuelve, te rodea, te estruja la voluntad...tú también has venido, tú también has oído la llamada de la devoradora de hombres” (00:32:53-33:00). The same scene in Kaplan’s film shows Luzardo frightened by his cousin’s desolate state. He turns to leave the thatched-roof hut where Barquero has been living when his cousin blocks the doorway and exclaims: “Tú también. Tú también, Santos Luzardo. Tú también oíste el llamado” (00:23:14-17). Confused by the remark, Luzardo asks for clarification:

Lorenzo Barquero: Yo era como tú y ahora soy esto. ¿No te da miedo?

Santos Luzardo: ¿Miedo?

Lorenzo Barquero: Has oído el llamado de la tierra y también
escucharás el llamado de ella.

Santos Luzardo: ¿De quién?

Lorenzo Barquero: La devoradora de hombres...Doña Bárbara. Y tú
también caerás en esos brazos y sentirás sus
caricias...y cuando los abra serás como yo soy.
(00:28:39-29:22)

Luzardo exits and the frame shifts to a long-shot of the *llano* where a mirage of Doña Bárbara materializes. The camera switches to a close-up shot of Barquero, who shouts, “Ella y la tierra son un solo monstruo...¡maldita tierra!...¡maldita mujer!...Santos Luzardo, ¡mírame! Esta tierra no perdona, ¡devora!” (20:46-29). Such references to Doña Bárbara’s embodiment of the *llano* reinforce the frontier’s (nature’s) ability to corrupt mankind. This remark mirrors, of course, José Eustasio Rivera’s (1888-1928) *La vorágine* (1924) in which the jungle becomes the barbaric force: “La selva los aniquila, la

selva los retiene, la selva los llama para tragárselos” (181). Territory must be conquered in order to bring civilization and progress (Manifest Destiny).

Upon examining sociopolitical and historical contexts of the Doña Bárbara myth further, one possible interpretation is that she embodies the corrupt governments that emerged during Latin America’s move towards modernity. Doña Bárbara is a powerful and barbaric being who is yet unable to control Luzardo, avatar of civilization. As the ultimate representation of barbarity, she maintains dominance over Barquero, Juan Primito and Don Balbino: all have succumbed to the *llano*’s barbaric influence, gluttony, superstition, and greed, respectively. As a malicious entity, she draws them towards moral corruption, whereas Santos Luzardo is, as his name suggests, the guiding light to redemption (civilization). Marisela mediates between the two. She slips in and out of barbarity as the struggle between the two forces ensues. In the end, Luzardo takes control over the *llano* and Doña Bárbara surrenders. In all versions, the visual symbolism of civilization’s dominance over barbarity manifests in the form of the fence (*cerca*) that physically contains Doña Bárbara’s corruptive forces, and the horse taming (*la doma*) that dominates the animal’s unbridled energy and symbolizes Luzardo’s triumph over Doña Bárbara’s corruption.

It has already been established that Doña Bárbara is the ultimate symbol of barbarity. Nevertheless, there is one important element of her myth, her redemption, that characterizes the frontier. Doña Bárbara represents a geographical space—the *llano*—where the battle between civilization and barbarity takes place. And yet, her backstory indicates that she was not born evil. Rather, the *llano* took hold of her just as it did the other corrupt *llaneros* after her rape. Just as Luzardo’s journey is both physical and

internal, so Doña Bárbara, too, faces the internal struggle between civilization and barbarity. Such “working through” is portrayed in different ways. In Gallegos’ version, it is unclear whether Doña Bárbara commits suicide or merely abandons the *llano*. The *telenovela* even alludes in the final episode to this mystery surrounding her disappearance as two characters debate her final fate (7:44-8:42).⁷⁰ In the scene leading up to her disappearance, Doña Bárbara learns of Luzardo and Marisela’s upcoming nuptials and decides to kill Marisela. As she aims the gun barrel at Marisela’s heart, she sees herself as a young woman in love with Asdrúbal.⁷¹ This self-recognition in her daughter causes her to expel the trauma that had governed her malicious decisions. In the next-to-last scene of Fuentes’ version, she has a conversation with “*El Socio*.” Doña Bárbara asks, “¿No vuelve el perdido a la encrucijada donde erró el camino?” (01:36:22-3). As she is about to place another curse on Luzardo, the voice reminds her, “¿Quieres que él [Luzardo/civilization] venga aquí? Entrega tus malas obras.” She responds, “¿Qué me pasa? ¿Qué me busco? Me tropiezo conmigo misma y no me encuentro...y no me encuentro” (01:37:14-26). The voice is clearly María Félix’s, suggesting that it is actually her subconscious speaking, a psychological journey that has a religious subtext. By repenting for her sins committed against Luzardo, Doña Bárbara finds redemption.

In Kaplan’s version, Doña Bárbara wills Marisela money and the titles to the land. She also tears down her altar and drops into the Río Arauca the blood-soaked shawl she carried with her since Asdrúbal’s death. In the *telenovela*, Doña Bárbara reconciles with Marisela and Luzardo, giving them her blessing. She then works for an orphanage charity

⁷⁰ Two minor characters exclaim back-and-forth: “Se murió” and “Se fue.”

⁷¹ “Puesto el ojo en la mira que apuntaba al corazón de la muchacha embelesada, doña Bárbara se había visto de pronto a sí misma bañada en el resplandor de una hoguera que ardía en una playa desierta y salvaje, pendiente de las palabras de Asdrúbal, y el doloroso recuerdo le amansó la fiereza” (240).

in a small town and presumably dies as, in the final scene, she embarks a *bongo* with Melquíades and Eustaquia, both deceased, in order to enter the spiritual world. All of this suggests that in recognizing her barbarity and renouncing Luzardo (civilization) in the end, she defeats her own internal battle between the two forces. And so while the Doña Bárbara myth does not exude an overtly Christian overtone, it does appear that the reconciliation it displays provides a secularized version of the Christian doctrine of reconciliation to God through repentance. Ultimately, Doña Bárbara repents on behalf of the love for her daughter, a “redemption of the conquered” that is present in other frontier myths: Sarmiento’s *gaucho* and Turner’s American Indian could overcome the same barbarity by allowing civilization to disseminate.

Given that Doña Bárbara is a metaphor for the struggle between civilization and barbarity, her duality manifests itself in a number of dichotomies. To begin with, Doña Bárbara is a *mestiza*, dual heritage the result of a rape. She also has a seemingly androgynous nature, which suggests yet a second dichotomy of masculine and feminine. One visual allusion to this seemingly appears on the cover of the first 1929 edition of Gallegos’ novel, where Doña Bárbara bears a striking resemblance to Leonardo da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa* (*La Gioconda*, 1503-6?), both portraits of dark-haired women with serious, androgynous features, depicted with a landscape background. Here, androgyny suggests that she is sexless, yet the Doña Bárbara myth contradicts this. The “*Devoradora de hombres*” is, unquestionably, a woman with a strong sexual drive and a steady string of lovers (Don Balbino and Lorenzo Barquero, for example). In a historical look at this concept, Mircea Eliade noted that androgyny was, in actuality, equated to divine perfection, an expression of unbroken totality (107-11). Doña Bárbara’s

androgyny, however, is not directly related to her outward physical appearance, as the first edition book cover suggests. Rather, her androgyny appears in her male-female duality. On one side, Doña Bárbara's character adheres to early 20th-century standards: beautiful, sexy, and seductive. Alternatively, she plays against gender norms by enacting a masculine role of tough and powerful landowner, moving from actively submissive to dominant positions vis-à-vis all male characters.⁷² This dualism highlights yet another dichotomy: natural versus unnatural. As critic Victorien Lavou Zoungbo has noted, Bárbara appears in three forms—as lover, as *cacica* and as mother—but because she occupies an unnatural space, she fails ultimately in each role. As lover, she is “*La devoradora de hombres*”: her beauty is both fascinating and dangerous—“una belleza del demonio” (Lavou Zoungbo 212); as *cacica*, she is successful, but in the end loses control of her peons and is forced to annex her land and cattle to Santos; as mother, although fulfilling her natural duty by giving birth to a child, her maternal instincts fail as soon as she abandons Marisela.⁷³ All of the *llano*'s inhabitants fear Doña Bárbara, a sentiment based not exclusively upon her outright negative demeanor. Her seemingly androgynous nature, which defies adherence to accepted gender roles and generates a monstrous nature, also creates an unconscious fear in her subordinates. By succumbing to Luzardo and accepting Marisela as daughter, Bárbara accepts ultimately her role as female and ceases to be an outsider. Fear is lifted from the *llano* and “order” restored, albeit a feudal one.

⁷² As critic André S. Michalski has suggested, Gallegos was writing from the point of view of realism and his female depictions reflected accepted societal gender norms: “[p]or un lado, es ella [Doña Bárbara] un personaje humano, retratado de acuerdo con las normas del realismo psicológico vigente en la novela del siglo diecinueve y principios del veinte...” (1020).

⁷³ “...un hijo en sus entrañas era para ella una victoria del macho, una nueva violencia sufrida, y bajo el imperio de este sentimiento concibió y dio a luz una niña, que otros pechos tuvieron que amamantar, porque no quiso ni verla siguiera” (Gallegos 26).

One remaining question in the Doña Bárbara myth is why Gallegos chose a female protagonist to represent barbarity. Furthermore, to what extent has her gender played in later reprisals? If she had been a man, such as Sarmiento's Quiroga, would she have been mythified in later versions? If Luzardo had defeated an *homme fatale*, such as in the Goliath/David myth, would the outcome still be the same? While there may not be an answer to these questions, Doña Bárbara's gender does constitute an important part of her mythical function. Gender becomes important when analyzing symbolic characters, particularly Luzardo—who represents reason and legality—and control over Doña Bárbara—ostensibly uncontrollable Nature. Because the Woman as Nature analogy is foundational, due to reproduction and birthing, the “woman-as-nature” or “nature-as-woman” metaphor transfers easily as symbol of the “nation”: the female carries both the biological and cultural identity of a specific group. Gendered personifications such as “motherland,” “mother tongue” or even “Mother Earth,” or “Pachamama,”⁷⁴ reinforce the patriarchal notion that the Nation (born from Nature) is a female entity that men must “protect” or else, bring under control. It is no surprise that the terms “*la naturaleza*,” “*la nación*,” and “*la patria*” are all feminine. By contrast, foreign invasions are actually viewed as a violation (penetration of foreign entities/ideas/sperm), often described as a “rape,” an invasion that hinders the community's survival and triggers protection of the woman/nation. The end result is that “men who cannot defend their woman/nation against rape lose their ‘claim’ to that body, that land” (Ranchod-Nilsson and Tétreault 68). Protection, however, can only be achieved through dominance. In order for men to “protect” their woman/nation, they must control her, thus ensuring continuation of their biological and cultural seed. Dominance is also applied to nature. Man must control the

⁷⁴ The Andean indigenous usually translated to “Mother Earth,” an Inca goddess.

Land in order to plant his (actual) seed and harvest crops—nutrients that ensure continuity.

If we apply all of these gendered assumptions to Gallegos' novel, Doña Bárbara appears as gendered metaphor for Venezuela. Not only is she a woman; more importantly, she is a *mestiza*—a hybrid of Spanish (European) and Amerindian bloods, a *mestiza* who represents, literally, Venezuela's largest demographic group, and, metaphorically, the nation's cultural heritage. Not surprisingly, Doña Bárbara also is the child of a rape: "Fruto engendrado por la violencia del blanco aventurero en la sombría sensualidad de la india, su origen se perdía en el dramático misterio de las tierras vírgenes" (Gallegos 21). One salient derivation is that this violation symbolizes Venezuela's Conquest and Colonization—the Spanish (European) invasion of the Amerindian nation. Doña Bárbara's own rape as a teenager symbolizes yet a second invasion: the invasion of corruption of Venezuela's body politic at the hands of dictators—and specifically (in Gallegos' case)—under Juan Vicente Gómez' regime. Doña Bárbara is not raped by a foreigner. On the contrary, her aggressors are fellow countrymen, thus suggesting that barbarity has penetrated the nation and disseminated among the population. Furthermore, Barbarita's change after the rape into *La devoradora de hombres* represents the ultimate consequence of man's inability to dominate and control the unyielding nation/woman. Also, Doña Bárbara becomes like men—violent, destructive, and corrupt. But the myth also includes one other important gendered metaphor: Marisela. In each of the versions we have examined, Marisela represents Venezuela's future: child of evil, yet redeemed by progress. Marisela's makeover symbolizes civilization's defeat over barbarity; in turn, she, as a reproductive symbol,

will give birth (literally and metaphorically) to a new generation. Whereas in Gallegos', Fuentes', and Kaplan's versions, this future is only alluded to, in the *telenovela*, however, Marisela and Luzardo wed and, logically, give birth to a daughter. While the audience only witnesses the child as an infant, Marisela notes the striking resemblance to Doña Bárbara the day she can no longer feel a connection to her mother: "Tengo a mi nena, que tiene sus ojos, que se parece a ella. Pero no siento a Bárbara" (36:49-36:40).

Upon examining the gender aspects of the Doña Bárbara myth, one cannot help to think of the Malinche myth as examined by Octavio Paz in *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950; 1959). Malinalli (Malinal; Malintzin)⁷⁵ referred to commonly as La Malinche, was a Nahua slave who eventually became Hernán Cortés' interpreter and lover. Doña Marina was the Christian name she received upon baptism. She is remembered for aiding the 1519 conquest of Tenochtitlan and the Aztec Empire's demise. La Malinche is an important figure in Mexican culture and is used typically to symbolize the ultimate embodiment of treachery. Octavio Paz first analyzed the myth while reading the national celebration of Independence, where Mexicans gather around to chant, "¡Viva México, hijos de la Chingada!" *La Chingada*, or the Raped Woman, refers to Malinche, and insights her function as a metaphor for the Spanish Conquest, the violated mother of the *mestizo* race of future generations who endure the trauma of the Conquest. In turn, Malinche re-creates the biblical Eve, the Woman responsible for original sin and the fall of Man. To be sure, Gallegos does not cite Malinche as inspiration for Doña Bárbara, but the similarities are striking indeed. Doña Bárbara is, in fact, Venezuela's Malinche: both

⁷⁵ As Sandra Cypess has pointed out: "It is generally accepted that she was born either in 1502 or 1505 on the day called Malinal (or Malinalli), hence her Indian name *Malinalli* (her emphasis, 33). With regards to the different spellings: "Since there are many variants of the spelling of some names, from La Malinche's Indian name (Malinal, Malinalli, Malintzin—even Malitzin, according to Rodolfo Usigli's play *Corona de fuego*)..." (x).

violated/raped, physically and metaphorically, a trauma that results in turning her to evil and destruction. And as Paz further points out, Malinche's treachery appears in contrast to the purity of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*, Mexico's *other* mother. Whereas the indigenous population was mythically abandoned by their gods and betrayed by La Malinche (the Conquest), they found comfort in Guadalupe, who welcomes the newfound orphans and becomes their new mother. And yet, at Independence celebrations it is La Malinche, not Guadalupe, who is invoked as national mother. The conflict is glaring.

In the Doña Bárbara myth, the Guadalupe's place is taken by Marisela. As noted, both mother and daughter have pivotal moments at age fifteen: but, while Doña Bárbara chooses evil, Marisela chooses good. The name Marisela ("little Mary") also evokes Guadalupe's ("the Virgin Mary"). At first wild and unkempt, Marisela is the innocent being that Luzardo saves from barbarity. By the end of the myth narrative, Marisela has evolved into the ideal woman, freed of the heritage of barbarity (corruption), and set to marry Luzardo and to become the (holy) mother of Venezuela's next generation.

Yet, quite apart from Marisela's gendered symbolism, why is it that the myth has Doña Bárbara bear a daughter and not a son? Would the myth have functioned if she had birthed a son? Could a son have symbolized Venezuela's future? While these questions do not have a definitive answer, a closer look at the mother-daughter relationship reveals that it is an important element of the myth that the several versions have attempted to address.

To begin with, the absentee mother is prevalent throughout the myth. Doña Bárbara's mother dies when she is young and, therefore, she is raised by her "*taita*," with whom she has no blood relation. While we do not know the circumstances of her death,

her absence was an abandonment that influenced Doña Bárbara's relationship with her own mother. It is no coincidence that Doña Bárbara gives birth to a daughter; because the myth purports a cycle of barbarity, a daughter, as opposed to a son, engenders the cycle. This is also clear in Barbarita's rape, as she, herself, was the product of one. Although Marisela's birth ought to enable Doña Bárbara to break the abandonment cycle, she chooses instead to reject her daughter, all the while remaining within close proximity. This cruelty, however, mirrors Doña Bárbara's own experience, albeit symbolically: Doña Bárbara's rape was a constant reminder that had her mother been alive, she may have never suffered such an attack. It is hardly a coincidence then that Luzardo should find Marisela when she is fifteen, the exact age of Doña Bárbara's rape, amidst the threat of Mister Danger, the agent of a next potential rape. While her mother is led down the darker path, Marisela does not experience a traumatic event that would unleash her inherited barbarity. Rather, Luzardo takes her under his wing and prevents barbarity from overtaking her. Because we know nothing about Doña Bárbara's mother, other than the fact that she was indigenous and was herself raped, she does spur the kind of speculation that the more contemporary versions attempt to reconcile. In Kaplan's film, for example, Doña Bárbara's rape is edited out completely along with all mention of her violent origins. In fact, Doña Bárbara embodies a certain maternal instinct, which she displays not only towards Marisela, but to Juan Primito as well. Therefore, any sense of abandonment is erased. Telemundo's version has attempted to reconcile Doña Bárbara's absentee mother with the Eustaquia character. The indigenous woman cares for Doña Bárbara after her mother dies in childbirth, saves her after her rape, and acts as a mother figure throughout the series. She not only nurtures Doña Bárbara, but acts as her

conscience, giving her advice in difficult moments.⁷⁶ And yet, a surrogate can hardly reconcile this absence. In other words, while these two versions have attempted to reconcile this aspect, the mother remains absent, an unresolved piece of the myth. For that reason, these versions—as well as future ones perhaps—appear unsatisfied.

The prevalence of the civilization and barbarity myth in different contexts suggests that their struggle is an integral part of the human experience. Stripping away the frontier myth's context, the civilization/barbarity struggle represents a balance between two innate forces. While for Turner, the “white” man would civilize the barbarous American frontier through Manifest Destiny, Sarmiento proposed to civilize the Argentine *pampa* by importing European bodies and ideas. Gallegos' own version was to civilize the Venezuelan *llano* through modernity.

Femmes-Fatales

Femmes fatales have been a prominent cultural figure since ancient mythologies. Cassandra, Clytemnestra, Penthesilia, Medea, Circe, Salome, Medusa, among others, all represent the female's unbridled and destructive sexuality. There was also the Hindu goddess Kali, the Egyptians Karina and Cleopatra, the Chinese Daji, and Biblical icons Jezebel, Delilah, and Salome, to name a few. The longevity of this interest in *devoradoras de hombres* indicates that man (and woman alike) have been historically intrigued by dangerous women.

Doña Bárbara is perhaps the most prominent *femme fatale* myth in Latin America. True to form, her danger is directly related to her sexuality and she uses it in order to gain control over men. She defies traditional gender norms, even appearing androgynous, and

⁷⁶ While on her deathbed, Doña Bárbara laments to Eustaquia, “Viejita, no te vayas. Tú eres la única que placa mis demonios” (27:39-45, Capítulo 185).

occupies a dominant position vis-à-vis other men. As her nickname suggests, she not only draws in men; she devours them, as evident in Lorenzo Barquero's destruction. Her sexuality creates mystery and intrigue and men fall into this trap consciously and willingly. Men are drawn to Doña Bárbara because of her beauty and power, and they desire to dominate her sexually. She derives pleasure from this interaction, perhaps not solely from its physicality, but from the pain she will cause her victim once it is over. Men enter this transaction knowing that with her passion/love/sex comes their own pain and/or death. Thus, by choosing the Doña Bárbara, they choose to be with all of her, embracing passion, pain, and death (Eros/Thanatos).

The modern *femme fatale* became a central theme in literature during the 19th century. As Mary Ann Doane has noted, "Her appearance mark[ed] the confluence of modernity, urbanization, Freudian psychoanalysis and new technologies of production and reproduction (photography, the cinema) born of the Industrial Revolution" (1). During this period, the male body's working capacity passed onto the machine as society became more urbanized and industrialized. Subsequently, men balanced this loss by overcompensating the female's metaphorical nature in art and literature. Her body was mythified in order to represent this industrial sterilization, thus explaining why the *femme fatale* is often represented as: "the antithesis of the maternal—sterile or barren, she produces nothing in a society which fetishizes production" (Doane 2). Thus, one sense of the *femme fatale* is that she reveals the dangers of female sexuality, specifically because the woman has agency. That is, she threatens the patriarchal notion of submissive female sexuality by taking charge of her own body. The threat explains perhaps why the *femme fatale* rarely succeeds. As an object of the male fantasy, she is penalized for contradicting

the established gender norms and labeled evil, punished, and/or killed. Thus, the fear surrounding the *femme fatale* can be interpreted as the threatened male subject's attempt to reassert control over her lest he be castrated. As E. Ann Kaplan has noted, "Men need to control women's sexuality in order not to be destroyed by it" (qtd. in Grossman 2). Thus, the *femme fatale* is rarely defined as a heroine—a subject of feminism—rather, she is "a symptom of male fears about feminism" (Doane 2-3).

Like many *femmes fatales*, Doña Bárbara is an ambivalent figure, for while she shows agency, it is given independently of consciousness.⁷⁷ And yet, in her myth Doña Bárbara births a child but abandons her immediately, thus abandoning her own maternal instincts. As an overrepresentation of the body, she is not the subject of power, but its carrier. In other words, like many *femmes fatales* "she has power *despite herself*" (her emphasis, Doane 2). Accordingly, Doña Bárbara's rape becomes an essential element to understanding why and how she became a *femme fatale*. Doña Bárbara does not emerge as *La devoradora de hombres* until she is raped. To her rape, she responds by raping back—castrating males. In fact, the myth's different versions even refer to the pre-rape character as "Barbarita," thus indicating a distinct difference between girl and woman. "Barbarita"'s rape is thus a pivotal moment in the Doña Bárbara myth. Her power originates from her unconscious, an unbalance between the self, the "I," the ego after this traumatic event. As Doane notes, "the power accorded to the *femme fatale* is a function of fears linked to the notions of uncontrollable drives, the fading of subjectivity, and the loss of conscious agency—all themes of the emergent theories of psychoanalysis" (2). As mentioned, Doña Bárbara faces her own barbarity and accepts/overcomes it at the end of

⁷⁷ Doña Bárbara's agency is not only linked to her body; rather, she holds control over production, law and feathers (economic power).

the myth narrative. While it is unknown how Doña Bárbara's mother dealt with this traumatic event, the rape of Doña Bárbara herself leads her to take fate into her own hands, albeit unconsciously. Had she not been raped, she would not have gained agency, an agency driven by the desire for revenge against men.

Each version of the Doña Bárbara myth deals differently with her rape. In Gallegos' version, for example, he describes it using a metaphor: the indigenous *gaván* hunt, a native bird trapped using fire. In Fuentes' case, 1940s censorship would not have permitted any allusion to sex, and so the viewers had to rely entirely on their imagination in order to piece together Barbarita's adolescent trauma. The novel is also conservative, yet provides much more information.⁷⁸ In fact, the film's depiction is so vague that it begs the question if audience members grasped the severity of this episode. On the other side of the spectrum, the rape scene is an integral part of the 2008-9 *telenovela* version. It not only sources Doña Bárbara's agency, but generates this version's central action: Doña Bárbara decides to punish and/or murder all of her rapists. Kaplan chose to edit out the rape scene, thus hindering the viewer from understanding fully Doña Bárbara's demeanor. This, perhaps, explains why her version was the least successful. By stripping Doña Bárbara of her victimhood, Kaplan created a disjointed character whose motivations are unclear. As a result, she is an incomplete *femme fatale*, as reflected in her disjointed interaction with men. On the one hand, it is clear that Doña Bárbara holds

⁷⁸ Gallegos expresses her rape scene with the following metaphor: "Reflejos de hogueras empurpuraban la oscuridad de la noche; oyese salvaje gritería. Es la caza del gaván. Los indios encienden fogatas de paja en torno a los pantanos inaccesibles; el ave levanta el vuelo, asustada por la algarabía, y sus alas se tiñen de rosa al resplandor del fuego entre las tinieblas profundas; pero, de pronto, los cazadores enmudecen y apagan rápidamente las hogueras, y el ave, encandilada, cae indefensa al alcance de las manos" (24). He then clarifies it with the following: "Algo semejante ha acontecido en la vida de Barbarita. El amor de Asdrúbal fue un vuelo breve, un aletazo apenas, a los destellos del primer sentimiento puro que se albergó en su corazón, brutalmente apagados para siempre por la violencia de los hombres, cazadores de placer" (24).

sexual control over men; on the other, there are scenes in which she remains in a subordinate position, even allowing Don Balbino to abuse her physically. Despite the latter, she states proudly, “Aquí todo el mundo sabe que no me gusta que se me cuestionen las órdenes” (00:23:26-30).⁷⁹ While the reasoning behind these decisions is unknown, it can be speculated that Kaplan envisioned a contemporary *femme fatale* who established her agency *consciously*. And yet, this seems impossible because the unconscious source of power is, in fact, an essential *femme fatale* quality. Kaplan appeared to “resolve” this lacking by disjointing Doña Bárbara’s interactions with men.

Despite the *femme fatale*’s Oedipal projection and metaphorical representation of modern industrialization, Doña Bárbara’s mythic stature cannot be overlooked. She is, in other words, a cultural byproduct that reflects societal values at a given point in history. As Julie Grossman has noted, *femmes fatales* are victims “whose strength, perverse by conventional standards, keeps them from submitting to the gendered social institutions that oppress them. It is the dialog between their perversity and their power...that fascinates [audiences]” (3). The ways in which Doña Bárbara uses her agency in order to address societal institutions indicates the cultural context. For this reason, the more contemporary versions shift her persona. In Gallegos’ and Fuentes’ versions, Doña Bárbara was a projection of Luzardo’s insecurity over his power over the *llano*. She was a dominant woman at a time when women were submissive. In Kaplan’s and Telemundo’s versions, Doña Bárbara no longer faces the same cultural stigmas.

Therefore, her inner world, which remained a mystery in previous versions, is penetrated

⁷⁹ Her role as a sinister character is equally confusing. For example, despite her hard demeanor, she comforts Juan Primito willingly when he is upset that Marisela is no longer at *La Chusmita*, holding him and whispering, “Soy tu doña...tu amiga” (00:36:33-00:37:56). She extends the same sentiment towards Marisela when, towards the end of the film, she gives Marisela money to transport the sick Barquero to the city (01:29:24).

and exposed in order to reveal a telling dialogue between her perversity and her power, the result perhaps of the inability in previous versions to penetrate fully the façade.

Unquestionably, the most marketable aspect of the Doña Bárbara myth has been the *femme fatale*. In fact, considering Roland Barthes' notion of cultural myths in Post-World-War-II capitalism, one can say that Doña Bárbara has been converted into a commodified myth of female sexuality. Indeed, the civilization/barbarity myth has become increasingly overpowered as it becomes sexualized, thus reinforcing the axiom that "sex sells." Gallegos' Doña Bárbara was sexual and provocative for that time period. Likewise, María Félix's beauty perpetuated this sentiment in Fuentes' version. In Kaplan's and Telemundo's contemporary versions, Doña Bárbara's outward sexual prowling became the focus. In fact, the viewer is left with the impression that *La devoradora de hombres* is concerned primarily with devouring her sexual desires. In Kaplan's version, this hyper-sexuality is evident in Doña Bárbara's first scene. The camera pans left across a hammock hung in a rustic dwelling and pauses briefly upon Doña Bárbara's face, she moans, then the camera pans along her half-naked body, breasts exposed, and on to her lover Don Balbino (00:10:40-11:08). In a later scene, Doña Bárbara is lying naked upon her bed for no apparent reason (00:53:25-36). At the roundup, Luzardo focuses solely upon Doña Bárbara's breasts as he speaks to her.⁸⁰ And in yet another scene, Doña Bárbara rubs erotically a scarf stained with Astrúbal's blood, shaking with pleasure (01:02:50-56). In yet another moment, Doña Bárbara seduces Don Balbino into telling her where the stolen feathers are, after which they have sex (01:26:54-28:13). Doña

⁸⁰ In this sequence, Santos stares at Doña Bárbara's chest, there is a close-up shot of her body and the camera moves slowly up to her face. At that moment, one of the peons sings a copla: "El toro se arrima a la vaca y el novilla se retira." Don Balbino looks uncomfortable (00:55:10-20).

Bárbara also seduces Luzardo to the point that he almost sleeps with her.⁸¹ Telemundo's version, as the series' promotional poster suggests, builds upon this sexual portrayal: Edith González stands in a dominant position in front of Santos Luzardo, her blouse half-open, exposing her cleavage.

This particular contemporary portrayal of Doña Bárbara is no longer then the androgynous Mona Lisa of Gallegos' 1929 novel. Rather, she is but a feminized version. Here, Ester González appears strong and beautiful, yet sexual and dangerous. Throughout the series, she enters into a sexual relationship with Luzardo as they break-up and reconcile on several occasions. Telemundo's newest version of the *femme fatale* will soon be revealed in 2016. *Doña Bárbara*'s promotional video shows a sequence in which Doña Bárbara moves around her bedroom in lingerie while a narrator incites her *femme fatale* status, thus suggesting that this sexuality will be taken to higher levels still.

Conclusion

A distinct evolution exists in the Doña Bárbara myth, from (inter)national allegory to commodified myth. We believe that Gallegos had originally intended for Doña Bárbara to be an allegory for Venezuela under Juan Vicente Gómez's dictatorship, a tumultuous era that prompted the author to criticize the effects of corruption on Venezuela's progress towards modernity. His critique of Gómez thus turned Doña Bárbara into a national allegory. The popularity of Gallegos' novel throughout Latin America and Spain, along with Fuentes' film, projected Doña Bárbara's myth internationally. Her symbolism extended to encompass the theme of civilization versus barbarity throughout the entire continent. Santos Luzardo and Doña Bárbara's struggle was an important part of the continent's cultural heritage. The film medium and Fernando

⁸¹ It should be noted, however, that this scene feels completely disjointed.

de Fuentes' popular adaptation spread her myth further, turning Doña Bárbara into a marketable product. Kaplan's 1998 film and Telemundo's 2008-9 *telenovela*, too, capitalized on this myth, and the television medium extended it even further. This shift in Doña Bárbara's symbolism recalls Roland Barthes' semiotic approach to myth. Barthes recognized that bourgeois cultural myths were, in fact, connotations: a sign (an object and its meaning) became a signifier to which a new signified (meaning) was attached.⁸² These cultural myths played an important role in capitalism. They often promote consumption, turning myth into commodity. The adaptations of *Doña Bárbara* display a similar phenomenon, particularly in the most recent *telenovela*.

When Gallegos' 1929 novel was first published, the intended audience was fellow educated whites and *mestizos*. Although the Doña Bárbara myth reached the Venezuelan *llaneros* (as displayed in Englekirk's article), she remained a symbol among the ruling élite. The novel's conversion into visual format—the 1943 film—had the potential to create a wider product distribution and to reach the illiterate public. Nevertheless, economics still affected its dissemination, a factor that also affected Kaplan's film release: the viewer must have the means to purchase a movie ticket, thereby excluding a portion of the population. The *telenovela*, however, had the greatest potential yet for mass dissemination. A TV set is one of the most basic contemporary household appliances and Telemundo's satellite transmission of the 2008-9 *Doña Bárbara* broadcast the series globally. In order to enhance its accessibility, Telemundo also aired the series for free on its website. Today, the series continues to run in syndication on several networks and can also be found on YouTube, a free video-streaming service. The *telenovela* has become an

⁸² One example Barthes cited in France was red wine's conversion into a symbol of a warm, healthy, robust experience. In reality, wine can have negative effects on health, but in creating a myth, bourgeois society was able to insert certain values.

important commodity in present-day Latin American capital, as *Doña Bárbara*'s international distribution demonstrates. Telemundo acknowledged they had struck gold as the series' adherence to the love-triangle formula, melodramatic elements, contemporary backdrop, and, perhaps most importantly, sexiness launched it immediately to success.

The *Doña Bárbara* myth is a narrative of the struggle between civilization and barbarity (Culture and Nature), and the *femme fatale*. And yet, stripping away all the historico-sociopolitical aspects of these myths and breaking them down further reveals that at the core of the *Doña Bárbara* myth lies an imbalance between two opposing forces. Human understanding has broken the world and mortal understanding into different binary oppositions whose natural balance must be contained. When even one side of the opposition becomes too powerful, order must be restored. In the civilization and barbarity myth, the former must overpower the latter, thus explaining why *Doña Bárbara* posed such a threat. The *femme fatale* myth reveals that when even the naturally subordinate female sexual drive becomes too powerful, this, too, must be corrected.

Yet another approach to interpreting the myth's core is by deconstructing these "natural" binaries. In other words, *Doña Bárbara*'s dualism and androgyny represents a breakdown in the Nature/Culture binary, as her existence suggests that this seemingly unwavering opposition is anything but. Nature becomes too cultural and Culture too natural, thus deconstructing the binary's conceptual assumptions. As a result, this deconstruction allows the myth to be interpreted from various angles, be it feminism, psychoanalysis, or ecocriticism, to name a few. It also suggests that the solution Gallegos offers—that civilization rein in barbarity; and man dominate female sexuality—remains an unsatisfying one. In other words, Gallegos' solution became in time too simple for

complex historical situations such as those ensued in post-1930's Latin America. This explains perhaps why the Doña Bárbara myth has been and continues to be reinterpreted, each version providing a different conclusion as attempts to reconcile such unconscious dissatisfaction. The forthcoming *Doña Bárbara telenovela* (2016-) avatar proves yet again that the Doña Bárbara myth continues to be relevant among contemporary audiences, as it suggests that Gallegos' solution is condemned to reinterpretation once again.

Chapter Three
(Post)Colonial Myth-Making: Anacaona, *La flor de oro*, and
Hatuey, *El primer rebelde de Cuba*

“Ese porvenir, que ya ha empezado, acabará por hacer incomprensible la ociosa pregunta
sobre nuestra existencia”
(*Calibán*, Roberto Fernández Retamar, 81)

“Costa: ¿Qué vas a hacer?”
“Daniel: Sobrevivir. Como siempre. Es lo que hacemos mejor”
(*También la lluvia*, Icíar Bollaín, 01:31:43-52).

Introduction

“La luz de Yara” is one of Cuba’s oldest legends. According to lore, a nocturnal light shines periodically in the Yara Oriente region that is said to be Hatuey’s unrest soul lingering where he was sacrificed by conquering Spaniards. Many believe that the light flared as the *cacique*, while burning alive, screamed through the flames. Other versions of the legend claim that the light was produced when Yara, a Taíno woman and possibly Hatuey’s wife, embraced the *cacique*’s burning body and become engulfed herself in the flames. The light is said to warn people of danger as they travel through the region.

While we will never know if Hatuey’s ghost really haunts the Yara region, he and Anacaona, two prominent Taíno *caciques* during the Spanish conquest of the Antilles, do appear everywhere. Statues of Hatuey and Anacaona are spread across Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. One can enjoy a *malta* or *cerveza* Hatuey while listening to “Anacaona,” Che Feliciano’s salsa hit, at the Bar Anacaona in Havana’s Hotel Saratoga. One can also lodge at the Rancho Hatuey in Sancti Spiritus, Cuba, or at the Anacaona Boutique Hotel in Anguilla also in Oriente Province. In the U.S., one can sip on an “Anacaona” specialty drink at Brooklyn’s Mamajuana Café⁸³ while reading Alfred Lord

⁸³ The website offers more information about the drink: “Named in honor of Taíno Chief born to what was then called the island of Hispaniola (current day Haiti and Dominican Republic). History has it that

Tennyson's poem "Anacaona." Indeed, some 500 years after their deaths, these two Taíno *caciques* have emerged from colonial symbols of indigenous injustice to commodities.

The first section of this chapter examines the Anacaona and Hatuey myths from their first appearance in Bartolomé de las Casas' *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552) followed by textual and filmic adaptations throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. As symbols of indigenous exploitation during the Spanish conquest and colonization, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths continued to influence Latin American intellectuals centuries later. They remain myths of rebellion against invading foreign powers and their stories have fueled both nationalist, anti-, and postcolonial movements throughout the Hispanic world. Given the longevity of these myths in literature and film, this chapter seeks to answer two questions: 1) why have the Anacaona and Hatuey myths survived in recent times; and 2) why were these Taíno *caciques*, as opposed to other marginalized indigenous figures from the same geographical and physical area, the subject of so many versions? This is followed by a reading of a number of versions, as they appear at different times: such as Juan Cristóbal Nápoles Fajardo's poem "Hatuey y Guarina" (between 1848 and 1860), Salomé Ureña de Henríquez's epic poem *Anacaona* (1880) and Francisco Sellén's *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos* (1891) during the 19th century; César Rodríguez Expósito's historical account *Hatuey: el primer libertador de Cuba* (1944) during Cuban nationalist campaigns under President Fulgencio Batista (1940-4); Edwidge Danticat's *Anacaona: Golden Flower, Haiti, 1490* (2005) in the Haitian-American diaspora; and Iciar Bollain's *También la lluvia* (2010), about

Anacaona stood in solidarity with her fellow Taíno ([C]aribbean indigenous natives) against the conquistadors and as a result, lost her life. Anacaona has been immortalized in novels, music and many other ways" (<http://www.mamajuanacafebronx.com/event/happy-hour/>)

postcolonial indigenous uprisings throughout the continent. After identifying common mythemes among these versions, the final section interprets the Anacaona and Hatuey myths by focusing upon two sub-mythemes that lead us ultimately to a deeper understanding of the myths' core connotations: 1) the sacrificial-child-martyr and scapegoat; and 2) Eurocentric constructions of the "noble savage."

Colonial Spanish Myth-Making: Las Casas, Anacaona, and Hatuey

In the introduction to *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil: 1500-1600* (2006), historian Alida Metcalf has noted that colonial chroniclers were representational go-betweens—or intermediaries between colonial European countries and their respective colonies—who represented European conquests and colonization through texts, words, and images.⁸⁴ Metcalf, in particular, notes the strong influence of these texts on European views of the Americas: "through writings, drawings, mapmaking, and the oral tradition, [representational go-betweens] shaped on a large scale how Europeans and Native Americans viewed each other" (10). Scholars rely by and large upon historical chronicles for the study of the Spanish Conquest and Colonization. Because Amerindian cultures relied upon oral tradition, the majority of indigenous accounts were lost. Colonial indigenous accounts exist primarily in the form of codices, hieroglyphics, petroglyphs, and Incan *quipus*. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566) is one of the most renowned

⁸⁴ Metcalf identifies three types of go-betweens: physical/biological, transactional, and representational. The first group travelled between spheres, creating a material link between the Old and New Worlds, such as the Amerindians that Cristóbal Colón took back to Spain after his 1492 discovery of the Antilles, and the second facilitated interaction as translators and negotiators, such as Jerónimo de Aguilar (1489-1531) and Malinalli (La Malinche) (c.1496 or c.1501-1529). The third group referred to colonial chroniclers. It should be noted that in the literary sense, "go-between" has a different connotation than Alida Metcalf uses in her text. In Hispanic Studies, this term is generally associated with the protagonist of Fernando de Rojas' *La Celestina* (1499). Metcalf notes this distinction: "In fiction, go-betweens are individuals of in-between social status who are mobile, able to function in very different worlds, frequently fluent in several languages, sometimes dabblers in magic, and oftentimes involved in intense, sexually charged situations. Not surprisingly, go-betweens in fiction frequently encounter tragedy. Celestina, the wily matchmaker in the Spanish novel *La Celestina*, pays the price of death for facilitating love, and Leo, the young carrier of messages in L. P. Hartley's novel *The Go-Between*, suffers an emotional breakdown" (3).

Spanish chroniclers, largely because of his fervent defense of the American indigenous population. In fact, as a result on September 17, 1516 the Spanish Crown appointed Las Casas as the official “*Defensor de los indios*.” The son of an *encomendero*, Las Casas had witnessed first-hand Spanish cruelty towards the Amerindian. It is believed that the Dominican friar was believed to have been born around November 11, 1484⁸⁵ in Sevilla, Spain (Parish and Weidman 385). At the age of nine, he saw the Amerindians that Colón had brought back to Spain. Las Casas’ own father sailed to the New World twice, in 1494 and 1500, and he accompanied the elder Las Casas to Hispaniola on Nicolás de Ovando’s 1502 expedition. The Spanish colonial endeavor in the New World was made up of a dual agenda. On the one hand, there was the thrust to evangelize the natives, who were viewed generally as barbaric idol-worshipers; on the other, was the *conquistador*’s lust for gold. In order to fuel the vast agricultural and mining missions, in March of 1503 Fernando II of Aragón and Isabel I of Castilla implemented the *encomienda* system—the economic backbone of the Spanish colonies. The name came from the Latin commendo(*are*) which meant “to entrust a person with the care of someone or something” (Rivera Pagán 114). The system was, in theory, designed to protect, teach, and evangelize the Amerindians, including instruction in good hygiene and work ethic.⁸⁶ In practice, the *encomienda* became a form of indentured slavery. Although King Fernando II did make a clear

⁸⁵ For centuries, it was believed that Las Casas was born in 1474. Helen Rand Parish and Harold E. Weidman’s research, however, shows that the Dominican Friar was actually born around 10 years later, presumptively on this date. For more information, see their article “The Correct Birthdate of Bartolomé de las Casas.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 56:3 (1976).

⁸⁶ It should be noted that “hygiene” was a very different notion to 15-century Spaniards than its contemporary connotation. As Luis N. Rivera Pagán notes, “Differences in daily hygiene as practiced by inhabitants of the tropics and colder climates were not the only reasons prompting the Spanish to restrain the Indians’ daily bathing. Of greater import was the moral problem: the Indians bathed in the rivers without any of the European Christian scruples for showing their naked bodies often and publicly. *Nakedness* was one of the peculiar and strange characteristics of Antillean Indians stressed by Columbus, Vespucci, and Pedro Mártir” (his emphasis, 114).

distinction between the *encomienda* and slavery in two August 14, 1509 royal decrees to Diego Colón: “Know that since the Indian islands and mainland of the Ocean sea were discovered through the grace of our Lord, the Indians have been *entrusted* to the settlers who have gone to reside in the island of Española...it seems that those settlers who received the *encomienda* used the Indians in that certain form and manner...” and “The apportioning of the Indians...is not for life, but only for two or three years...They shall be marked servants and not as slaves” (his emphasis, qtd. in Rivera Pagán 116). Soon after its implementation, the Spanish crown was flooded with complaints, particularly from clergymen who bemoaned indigenous exploitation at the hands of greedy *conquistadors*.

While it is not clear exactly when Las Casas was ordained a priest, historians believe it was between 1507 and 1510, in which he later joined the Dominican order.⁸⁷ Having contributed to his father’s own *encomienda*, the young friar accepted initially that the system indeed offered protection and religious teachings to the indigenous population. These views changed, however, after hearing Fray Antón de Montesinos’ December 1511 sermon on the island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and Dominican Republic), when Montesinos, himself a Dominican friar, denounced the *encomenderos* publicly for exploiting the Amerindian in what is known today as the first cry for indigenous justice.⁸⁸ Las Casas, an *encomendero* himself, soon gave up this practice in order to fight against it vehemently. Unable to persuade other colonials to join in the fight, Las Casas returned to

⁸⁷ As Lawrence A. Clayton has noted: “Perhaps he was ordained in Rome in the spring of 1507, by the Pope himself or some other high church dignitary. Or the first bishop of Puerto Rico, Alonso Manso, may have done the honor on his way through Concepción de la Vega in November 1510. Father Pedro de Córdoba himself may have ordained Las Casas when both were in la Vega. Seville is also a candidate for the place of ordination, in 1507 or 1508, on Las Casas’ way to or from Rome. It was his hometown and the archbishop of Seville was then presiding over the diocese of the Indies. The overwhelming evidence points to the answer, ‘we really do not know’” (55-6).

⁸⁸ A statue of Antonio de Montesinos was erected in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in 2011 for the 500th year anniversary of his famous cry for justice.

Spain in September 1515 and began his lifework for Amerindian justice. His most celebrated texts include: *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1542; 1552), and *Historia de las Indias* (1556; published 1875).⁸⁹

While the Spanish Conquest and Colonization affected all Amerindian groups, the focus of this analysis is on the Taíno indians of the Caribbean region. Taínos, a sub-set of the Arawak peoples that inhabited the Greater and Lesser Antilles, were the first Amerindians that Colón encountered in the Caribbean. Las Casas dedicates the first section of his *Brevisísima relación* to Taíno history and culture before recounting how the population was destroyed by disease and violence. As its title suggests, the chronicle offers only a brief account. Years later, Las Casas went into further detail in his *Historia de las Indias*.⁹⁰ Unbeknownst to its author, the accounts of *caciques* Anacaona and Hatuey in this small section on the Taínos would impact Caribbean culture forever, as their stories centuries later would become mythified in a number of versions. Las Casas was inspired to write his first account while accompanying as a chaplain *conquistadors* Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar and Pánfilo de Narváez during their 1512 conquest of Cuba.

Anacaona and Hatuey appear as well in Peter Martyr d'Anghiera's (1457-1526) *De Orbe Novo* (1530), but this author composed his chronicle in Spain using letters, chronicles published by other authors, and personal interviews with those who had travelled to the New World he never visited. Las Casas, on the other hand, was present in the Antilles at the time of Anacaona's and Hatuey's deaths—although he does not say exactly where—and his writings go into greater detail than Martyr d'Anghiera's. Thus,

⁸⁹ Las Casas had originally instructed the Colegio de San Gregorio to publish it in 1601.

⁹⁰ In *Brevísima relación*, Anacaona and Hatuey appear in the chapter "La isla de Cuba"; in *Historia de las Indias*, Anacaona appears in Volume 1, Chapters 113, 114, and 116, Volume 2, Chapters 9, 10, 31, and 50, while Hatuey appears in Volume 3, Chapters 21, 25, and 26.

before broaching Anacaona's story, Las Casas begins his account of the martyrs with a brief description of the Taíno region. Five Taíno territories, the denoted "Hispaniola" on the island, were seized upon the 1492 encounter. It is believed that the island's original name was Quisqueya, or "mother of all lands" in the Taíno language. Anacaona was the wife of Caonabó, *cacique* of the Maguana territory, and sister to Bohechío, *cacique* of Xaraguá (Jaraguá). Anacaona—"Flor de Oro" ("Golden Flower") in the Taíno language⁹¹—was known for her generous and agreeable demeanor, particularly towards the Spaniards. Las Casas describes her as such: "...Anacaona fue una notable mujer, muy prudente, muy graciosa y palaciana en sus hablas y arres y meneos y amicísima de los cristianos" (*Historia* 464; vol. 1). Anacaona authored many *areítos*, or indigenous performances involving song and dance, and many were produced in her honor. As a daughter of Xaraguá *caciques*, Anacaona married Caonabó and moved to the Maguana territory. Unlike his wife, Caonabó was so aggressive towards the Spaniards that in 1493, shortly after Cristóbal Colón's first voyage, he and his men burned down La Navidad—a Spanish settlement—during Colón's first return trip to Spain. La Navidad, positioned in the allied Marién territory, had Guacanagarix, Colón's only indigenous ally, as its *cacique*; Guacanagarix himself informed Colón that Caonabó had been responsible. To this, *conquistador* Alonso de Ojeda's forces retaliated. After years of fighting, Ojeda finally captured Caonabó during a 1495 massacre in the Maguana region. The *cacique* later perished in a shipwreck en route to Spain for his trial. Shortly after Caonabó's death,

⁹¹ It is generally accepted that "*caona*" means "golden" and "*ana*," "flower" in the Taíno language. José Juan Arrom notes that this translation for "*ana*" first appears in Charles Etienne Brasseur de Bourbourg's "Quelques vestiges d'un vocabulaire de l'ancienne langue de Haiti et des ses dialectes" in his *Relation des choses de Yucatan de Diego de Landa* (1864). However, Arrom's own research indicates that "*totocolo*" is Taíno for "flower" and that "*anaka(n)*" translates to "center." He offers this translation of her name: "Centro o Corazón de lo Celestialmente Valioso," or "Center or Heart of the Celestially Valuable" (my translation, "Aportaciones Lingüísticas" 10-11).

Anacaona and daughter Higuemota returned to Xaraguá to live with her brother Bohechío, upon whose natural death Anacaona became the Xaraguá *cacica* and remained friendly towards the Spaniards.⁹² Ojeda, nevertheless, resisted strongly to Anacaona's insistence that there was no gold in the Xaraguá region and in 1503 organized an attack upon the region, captured Anacaona who was then publicly hanged after refusing to become a concubine to the Spanish. Las Casas notes, in fact, that a hanging sentence became a way of honoring Anacaona: "A todos los otros alancearon y metieron a espada con infinita gente, y a la señora Anacaona, por hacerle honra, ahorcaron" (*Brevísima relación* 85).

Las Casas' account then continues on to Hatuey's story, which occurs eight years later. In 1511, *conquistador* Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar arrived to Hispaniola under Diego Colón's—eldest son of Cristóbal Colón and Viceroy of the Indies—order. Taíno *cacique* Hatuey, believed to have been in contact with Anacaona and Bohechío, thus fled to Cuba to warn the other Taínos that the "Christian" arrival meant the Spaniard's real god was gold and they intended to subjugate and kill the Amerindians in order to fulfill their lust. Hatuey thus convinced the indigenous people to throw away all of their gold and jewels and prepare for a counterattack. Velázquez de Cuéllar and his men arrived in Cuba in 1512 whence upon Hatuey was eventually captured and burned at the stake for insurgency. While Las Casas was not present during Hatuey's death, he chronicled that when a Spanish priest urged the *cacique* to convert to Christianity before being burned, Hatuey asked whether Spaniards went to Heaven, and upon being told that the good ones did, he preferred going to Hell. Las Casas explained that Hatuey's martyrdom had been

⁹² As Las Casas notes: "Estos dos hermanos hicieron grandes servicios a los reyes de Castilla [e] inmensos beneficios a los cristianos, librándolos de muchos peligros de muerte..." (*Brevísima relación* 85).

the final straw in the Taíno population's destruction. Shortly after defeating Hatuey's forces in 1512, Velázquez de Cuéllar founded the city of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Baracoa, on Cuba's extreme southeastern coast. Six months later, Spanish forces captured and killed Caguax, the local *cacique*, thus diminishing indigenous resistance on the island. As Velázquez de Cuéllar and his troops moved further inland, many Amerindians jumped off cliffs and hung themselves in order to avoid being burned at the stake. Others died from either exhaustion while working in the mines, or hunger. Those who managed to escape fled to the nearby mountains; present-day Cuban indians are descendants of those escapees.⁹³ In Las Casas' *Brevísima relación*'s, the island is described as desolate.

Las Casas' account is the only lengthy extant documentation of Anacaona and Hatuey. Velázquez de Cuéllar's own *Carta de relación de la conquista de Cuba* to King Fernando (December 15, 1512) mentions the *cacique* "Yacahuey," but avoids going into detail.⁹⁴ And yet, the fact that Anacaona and Hatuey continued to appear in 16th- and 17th-century texts chronicling the Spanish Conquest and Colonization, as in Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas's *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del mar Océano que llaman Indias* (1601-1615) and Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia general de las Indias* (1553), illustrates the importance they acquired. The two, who fit perfectly into Las Casas' agenda to shed a humanistic light on the Spanish colonial endeavor, are symbols of Amerindian resistance. The initial encounter

⁹³ In a 1964 expedition, Cuban anthropologist Dr. Manuel Rivero de la Calle's met with Taíno descendant and *cacique* Ladislao Rojas and discovered that oral history was very much still a practice in the 20th century, as it had been for hundreds of years (Barreiro "Taíno Survival" 32). The story of Hatuey was passed down from generation to generation, along with the "Legend of Yumurí," according to which entire Amerindian families committed suicide in order to escape Spanish cruelty (Barreiro "Survival Stories" 35).

⁹⁴ "De todo lo dicho fue Capitán un indio de la Española que fue criado i Capitán del cacique Yacahuey, el que ya es muerto" (3). *Carta de relación de la conquista de cuba*. Ed. Carlos M. Raggi. Troy, NY: Círculo de Cultura Panamericano, 1965. Print.

between Colón and the Taínos forever defined the Amerindian for the West as sub-human and primitive. Las Casas fought against the negative perception of the Amerindian at the Valladolid debate (1550-1), which took place at the Colegio de San Gregorio in Valladolid, Spain, and was the first moral dispute over the treatment of indigenous peoples. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda was Las Casas' strongest opponent there and advocated "just war" against the natives, even prompted by Cardinal García de Loaysa of Sevilla, the President of the Council of the Indies, to publish a book on the "Amerindian problem." Sepúlveda defended the Spanish Conquest on four principals: 1) the sins committed by Amerindians (especially idolatry) were particularly grave; 2) Amerindians exhibited a rude nature, as opposed to the Spaniards more refined one; 3) the Catholic faith must be spread among them; and 4) Spaniards had to protect the weak amongst the Amerindians themselves. In contrast, Las Casas fought vehemently to prove that the Amerindians were capable of change and not merely victims of a "static and hopeless barbarity." Las Casas' 1537 treatise *Del único modo de atraer a todos los pueblos a la verdadera religión* was the start of a long theological polemic between the two figures. As Lewis Hanke explained, "Las Casas, ripe with theological study and experience of almost half a century in America, waged scholastic combat at the Spanish court against Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, humanist and royal historiographer, in an attempt to prohibit such [just] wars" (*Spanish Struggle* 109). This polemic continued until 1551, when Sepúlveda was denied to publish his writings further in Spain. The following year, Las Casas published his most influential text, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ For more information about this polemic, see Lewis Hanke's *All Mankind is One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and*

The Western “discovery” of this unknown human race displaced the Amerindian to a subaltern position, or as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has noted, one that condemned the subaltern to silence by denying the indigenous population access to a central discourse. Thus, Las Casas sought to bring the Amerindians out of their sub-human position by not only denouncing the *conquistador*’s cruel treatment of the natives, but by celebrating those “positive” qualities that ensured that these beings were, in fact, men with souls. He, along with other defenders such as Fray Francisco de Vitoria (1486-1546), believed that the *conquistador*’s lust for gold was inhibiting the Church’s religious endeavor of spreading Catholicism throughout the continent, as epitomized by Hatuey’s deathbed remarks. It has often been interpreted that Las Casas witnessed the *caciques*’ deaths, yet nowhere in his chronicles does he state this explicitly. In *Brevísima relación* he does state that he saw the death of thousands of Amerindian children: “En tres o cuatro meses, estando yo presente, murieron de hambre por llevarles los padres y las madres a las minas más de siete mil niños.” (93). Therefore, given Las Casas’ agenda, and the fact that he did not witness firsthand Anacaona’s and Hatuey’s deaths, one might ask: were their stories factual?

One strong critique that has been wielded against Las Casas is his abuse of hyperbolic imagery, particularly in his representations of Spanish cruelty. *Brevísima relación* is a small text, yet its vivid images and personal anecdotes had a lasting effect on perceptions of 16th- and 17th-century Spain. As was customary in colonial chronicles, the text opens with a letter to King Carlos I of Spain.⁹⁶ Here, Las Casas lays out his

Religious Capacity of the American Indian, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois UP, 1974.

⁹⁶ Son of Felipe I of Castile and grandson of Fernando of Aragon and Isabel of Castile.

defense in writing the account: to “speak” for the native peoples who had been robbed of any ability to represent themselves under the *encomienda*:

...; que constándole a Vuestra Alteza algunas particulares hazañas dellos [los conquistadores], no podría contenerse de suplicar a Su Majestad con instancia importuna que no conceda ni permita las que los tiranos inventaron, prosiguieron y han cometido, llaman conquistas. En las cuales (si se permitiesen) han de tornarse a hacer, pues de sí mismas (hechas contra aquellas indianas gentes, pacíficas, humildes y mansas que a nadie ofenden) son inicuas, tiránicas, y por toda ley natural, divina y humana condenadas, detestadas y malditas; deliberé, por no ser reo, callando, de las perdiciones de ánimas y cuerpos infinitas que los tales perpetrarán... (72)

Las Casas creates a dichotomy of good and evil between “innocent Amerindians” and “treacherous Spaniards.” As Ramón Menéndez Pidal has pointed out, “everything done in the Indies by Columbus and the Spaniards was diabolical and must be annulled and done all over again, whereas everything done by the Indians was good and just” (qtd. in Keen 710). Such Amerindian portrayal was in stark contrast to Sepúlveda’s comparison of the Amerindian “as children are to adults, women to men” and “finally, one could say monkeys are to men,”⁹⁷ (*Demócrates segundo* qtd. in Rivera Pagán 135). In Las Casas version, however, “Son eso mesmo de limpios y desocupados y vivos

⁹⁷ It should be noted that Sepúlveda eventually deleted this last part. As Luis Rivera Pagán notes, “We suspect that the phrase was eliminated by Sepúlveda himself from the original version to soften his thesis and attain the necessary authority to publish his book, especially after Pope Paul III’s bull *Sublimis Deus* (1537) which affirmed the full humanity of the natives” (135).

entendimientos, muy capaces y dóciles para toda buena doctrina, aptísimos para recibir nuestra sancta fe católica y ser dotados de virtuosas costumbres, y las que menos impedimentos tienen para esto que Dios crió en el mundo” (75). Las Casas’ hyperbolic images aided in the creation of a larger divide between the Amerindians and their counterpart, as shown in his description of the Spanish conquistadors:

...nuestros españoles por sus crueldades y nefandas obras han despoblado y asolado... más de diez reinos mayores que toda España... Dos maneras generales y principales han tenido los que allá han pasado, que se llaman cristianos, en extirpar y raer de la haz de la tierra a aquellas miserandas naciones. La una, por injustas, crueles, sangrientas y tiránicas guerras; la otra, después que han muerto todos los que podrían anhelar o suspirar o pensar en libertad, o en salir de los tormentos que padecen... oprimiéndolos con la más dura, horrible y áspera servidumbre en que jamás hombres ni bestias pudieron ser puestas. A estas dos maneras de tiranía infernal se reducen y se resuelven o subalternan como a géneros todas las otras diversas y varias de asolar aquellas gentes, que son infinitas. (76-7)

Las Casas wished to protect and evangelize the Amerindians, a wish that could only be achieved by removing the Spanish *conquistadors* from the picture. As a result, he created a shocking image of the Spanish colonies that not only reverberated throughout Spain, but across Europe as well. As a representational go-between in the New World, Las Casas’ depiction of Spanish cruelty played an important role in political tensions in

the following century,⁹⁸ and contributed greatly to the “Black Legend” that continues to fuel contemporary perceptions of the Spanish Conquest. The “Black Legend” is a narrative about colonial Spanish cruelty that emerged in the 16th century, an anti-Spanish sentiment that was largely fueled by political and economic propaganda from Spain’s adversaries such as England.⁹⁹ By the mid-17th century, *Brevísima relación* had been banned across Spain in an attempt to suppress negative foreign perceptions.¹⁰⁰ However, the text’s popularity grew exponentially throughout Europe: “...the first foreign translation (Dutch) appeared in 1578, followed by French (1579), English (1583), and German (1599) versions” (Keen 712).¹⁰¹ Historian Hubert Herring noted that *Brevísima relación* “furnished fuel for Spain’s enemies, who forthwith made capital of Spain’s iniquities for their own ends. It laid a solid foundation for the ‘Black Legend’ which has colored the writings of the English, Dutch, Germans, and Americans ever since” (qtd. in Keen 709-10). Herring also concluded that Las Casas’ account is overwhelmingly exaggerated, even down to the statistics he presented, the most controversial of which was the number of Amerindians the Spaniards killed off. Las Casas cites between fifteen and twenty million, a number that has subsequently increased over time, but historians debate this point strongly.¹⁰² Exaggeration, however, was a common fixture of the style of colonial chronicles, as John Fiske pointed out: “the arithmetic of Las Casas is...no

⁹⁸ As demonstrated by the Sepúlveda polemic.

⁹⁹ For more information, see William S. Maltby’s *The Black Legend in England: the Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558-1660* (1971).

¹⁰⁰ As bibliographer Antonio León Pinelo noted in his *Tratado de confirmaciones reales* (1630), *Brevísima relación* fueled this legend outside of Spain by “diminishing and destroying their exploits, exaggerating and elaborating their cruelties with a thousand synonyms: this delights foreigners” (qtd. in Keen 705).

¹⁰¹ Although other texts, such as Girolamo Benzoli’s *Historia del Mondo Nuovo* (Venice, 1565), spoke of Spanish cruelty, *Brevísima relación* was by far the most revered one.

¹⁰² See Benjamin Keen’s “The Black Legend Revisited: Assumptions and Realities.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 49 (1969): 703-719.

worse than that of all the Spanish historians of that age. With every one of them the nine digits seem to have gone on a glorious spree” (qtd. in Keen 710).

This hyperbolic imagery and exaggeration in Las Casas’ chronicles is pertinent to the overall function of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths. As real historical figures, yet also representatives of indigenous martyrdom, Las Casas most likely emphasized these *caciques*, perhaps exaggerating their stories, because they fit perfectly into his political agenda. In order to regulate policy in the New World, the Spanish Crown relied on representational go-betweens. Thanks to advocates such as Montesinos and Las Casas, there were two important reformations: 1) the *Leyes de Burgos* (1512), which redacted the *encomienda* system, and 2) *El Requerimiento* (1513), a document to be read to indigenous groups explaining that if the Amerindians did not accept the Spanish Crown and the Pope as their new sovereign power, they would be attacked.¹⁰³ And yet, given that colonial discourse was an integral part of Spanish domination in the Americas, and that those involved had personal agendas of their own, the historical veracity of these documents is invariably put into question, as becomes most evident in descriptions of the Amerindian. The European written word was able solely to shape the history of the conquest and colonization precisely because Amerindian populations, who relied on the

¹⁰³ Selected fragments from *El Requerimiento*: “De parte del rey, Don Fernando, y de su hija, Doña Juana, reina de Castilla y León, domadores de pueblos bárbaros, nosotros sus siervos, os notificamos y os hacemos saber, como mejor podemos...como señor del mundo hizo donación de estas islas y tierra firme del mar Océano a los dichos Rey y Reina y sus sucesores en estos Reinos, con todo lo que en ella hay...Por ende, como mejor podemos, os rogamos y requerimos que entendáis bien esto que os hemos dicho, y toméis para entenderlo y deliberar sobre ello el tiempo que fuere justo, y reconozcáis a la Iglesia por señora y superiora del universo mundo, y al Sumo Pontífice, llamado Papa, en su nombre, y al Rey y Reina doña Juana, nuestros señores, en su lugar, como a superiores y Reyes de esas islas y tierra firme, por virtud de la dicha donación y consintáis y deis lugar que estos padres religiosos os declaren y prediquen lo susodicho. Si así lo hicieseis, haréis bien, y aquello que sois tenidos y obligados, y sus Altezas y nos en su nombre, os recibiremos con todo amor y caridad, y os dejaremos vuestras mujeres e hijos y haciendas libres y sin servidumbre...Y si así no lo hicieseis o en ello maliciosamente pusieseis dilación, os certifico que con la ayuda de Dios, nosotros entraremos poderosamente contra vosotros, y os haremos guerra por todas las partes y maneras que pudiéramos...Y de cómo lo decimos y requerimos pedimos al presente escribano que nos lo dé por testimonio signado, y a los presente rogamos que de ello sean testigos.”

oral tradition, lagged behind the written word. As the indigenous population dwindled, their ability to pass down oral history declined. Although there is no way to corroborate his account, it can be assumed that Las Casas heard what had happened to Anacaona and Hatuey from surviving Taínos, or perhaps even from other Spaniards. Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar's own mention of "Yacahuey" suggests that these *caciques* did exist. But, whether or not the legend regarding Hatuey's martyrdom is true—denying the Catholic god and preferring Hell before being burned at the stake—, or whether Anacaona remained peaceful until her death, remain uncorroborated accounts. Las Casas himself went into greater detail about these *caciques* because denial of the Spaniards' lust for gold was an essential element of his own propaganda; the worldview of the colonized challenging the colonizer's. Anacaona and Hatuey not only condemned the Spaniards for their lust for gold; in the case of Hatuey's legend, he rejected openly their religious hypocrisy. The violence of their deaths promotes their victimhood further, as they become icons of Spain's violent legacy. They are symbols of resistance against indigenous injustice, symbols that eventually would translate as foundational Pan-Caribbean myths embodied in 19th-, 20th-, and 21st-century mythical versions. As we saw in the Doña Bárbara myth, these modern mythical versions not only meditate on the myth, but several aspects depart from it, stage and critique it.

Versions of the Myths

The *Siboneísta* School: Juan Cristóbal Nápoles Fajardo's "Hatuey y Guarina" (1848-60)

While Anacaona's and Hatuey's stories continued to appear in 16th- and 17th-century chronicles, literary versions did not emerge until the 19th-century Independence

period (1810-1902). Cuban, Dominican, and Puerto Rican intellectuals invoked Taíno lore as a symbol of nationalist movements. The Anacaona and Hatuey myths united Creoles against a common cause—independence from Spain—one that mimicked the Taíno *caciques*' colonial struggle. Because the Taínos were unique to Caribbean heritage, they provided a barrier between Creoles and Spain. Granted, Creole intellectuals did not share a bloodline with the famous *caciques*, but separatists nevertheless drew symbolic capital from them: a stance against metropolitan exploitation. The Anacaona myth's first literary adaptation was Juan Vila y Blanco's *Anacaona, leyenda histórica en cuatro cantos* (1856). Vila y Blanco (1813-1886) was a journalist and town chronicler in Alicante, Spain. As the title suggests, the poem is divided into four cantos written in *octavas reales*, or stanzas of eight eleven-syllable verse with consonant rhyme scheme ABABABCC. In the eface, Vila y Blanco notes his inspiration to reimagine Anacaona's life after reading Washington Irving's *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (1828), despite never having been to Latin America. This is Vila de Blanco's only work with an American theme and it is unclear whether the text was popular enough to reach an American audience.

Influential Dominican intellectual and literary critic Pedro Henríquez Ureña¹⁰⁴ (1884-1946) noted once that Romanticism reached Latin America through lyrical poetry and later continued into theater and the novel (122). Indeed, the first Latin American version of the Hatuey myth was Francisco Sellén's play *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos* (1891). However, political factors like the wars of Independence differentiated the American Romantic current from its European source. American Romantic works were tied typically to social issues and nationalist campaigns, especially

¹⁰⁴ He and his mother, Salomé Ureña, are on the Dominican 500 peso.

in emerging nations. *Indianismo*, for example, was an important literary current within Romanticism whereby authors presented idealized versions of the Amerindians, whose ethnicity and class status marginalized them.¹⁰⁵ *Indianista* authors (such as Salomé Ureña and Francisco Sellén) exalted important colonial Amerindian figures on behalf of nationalism, nation-building campaigns that created what Benedict Anderson calls an “imagined community”—peers uniting within a shared cultural heritage. As Julio Rodríguez Luis noted, “Es el ‘indio’, en lugar del indígena, el objeto de la literatura indianista que en la segunda mitad del XIX idealiza al ‘buen salvaje’ americano como parte del proyecto romántico de definir nuestra especificidad frente a Europa...” (*Hermenéutica* 41). Thus the Cuban *Siboneístas*¹⁰⁶ were an *indianista* group that during the 1840s and 50s paid particular homage to the region’s indigenous past as a way of evoking the Amerindian’s heroic resistance to the Spanish Conquest and promotion of nationalism. Among the *Siboneístas* were Narciso Foxá y Lecanda (1822-83), Pedro Santacilia (1834-1910), Ramón Vélez Herrera (1808-86), José Fornaris y Luque (1827-90), and Juan Cristóbal Nápoles Fajardo (1829-59).

Nápoles Fajardo, popularly known as “*El Cucalambé*,”¹⁰⁷ is one of the most revered *siboneísta* poets. *Decimario siboneísta* (1848-60) is a collection of poems that

¹⁰⁵ These texts were a precursor to the *indigenista* genre of the early 20th century, a division of the regionalist novel, which, although similar in theme to *indianista* texts, focused on presenting the most authentic portrayal possible of the Amerindian.

¹⁰⁶ This group derived their name from the *Siboneyes*, the indigenous group living in the Antilles before the Taínos.

¹⁰⁷ There are several speculations on what this means. One accepted translation is that “*Cucalambé*” is a popular Caribbean African dance. According to Fernando Ortiz: “...Juan Cristóbal Nápoles Fajardo se hizo llamar *El Cucalambé*, combinación bilingüe de cook (cocinero, en inglés) y calambé (taparrabos, delantal en lengua de nuestros aborígenes)” (qtd. from *Nuevo catauro de cubanismos*. Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1974: 179 in Tamayo Rodríguez).

pays particular homage to Cuba's Taíno heritage.¹⁰⁸ "Hatuey y Guarina," arguably the most representative *siboneísta* poem, centers on Hatuey and his lover Guarina. While no chronicle mentions this lover, she becomes an essential metaphor in Nápoles Fajardo's poem for Cuba. As we saw in our reading of *Doña Bárbara*, woman has been used historically as a metaphor for the nation. In Nápoles Fajardo's poem, Hatuey must leave Guarina in order to fight the Caribs. The first two verses describe Hatuey before his departure: "Con un cocuyo en la boca/ Y un gran tabaco en la mano/ Un indio desde una roca/ Miraba el cielo cubano" (151). With the "cocuyo"—or click beetle—and cigar, recognizable Cuban symbols, Hatuey thus endures the sadness of his departure,¹⁰⁹ a sentiment shared by 19th-century Cuban exiles. Although moved by his longing for Guarina, Hatuey responds to his call of duty: "Sordo a la voz del amor,/ porque la patria me llama" (154). Conforming to traditional ideal of femininity, whereby the female remains patient and suffers in silence as the male goes off to war, Guarina accepts her lover's departure and swears her loyalty.¹¹⁰ Their bittersweet departure, thus, becomes symbolic of the Cuban exile's longing to return to a Cuba free from Spanish rule.

One important element that will echo throughout all the versions of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths discussed here is the re-creation of the Amerindian point-of-view. The exception, of course, is Las Casas. Much as we saw in later versions of the Doña Bárbara myth, the desire to enter the Amerindians' internal world—to understand their thoughts, feelings, motivations, and, perhaps most importantly, the reasons why these powerful

¹⁰⁸ The poems in this collection include: "El cacique de Maniabón," "El behíque de Yarigua," "Hatuey y Guarina," "Narey y Coalina," "Bartolomé de Las Casas," "Morgan," "Los indios de Cueiba," and "Caonaba."

¹⁰⁹ "Y susurran las yagrumas/ Mientras él suspira triste" (Stanza 1, 151).

¹¹⁰ "—Vete, pues, noble cacique,/ Vete, valiente señor,/ Pues no quiero que mi amor/ A tu patria perjudique;/ Mas deja que te suplique,/ Como humilde esclava ahora,/ Que si en vencer no demora/ Tu valor, acá te vuelvas,/ Porque en estas verdes selvas/ Guarina vive y te adora" (155).

caciques failed—, are, perhaps, a critique of the myth. The tenets and example of the *siboneísta* school—Nápoles Fajardo in particular—is, perhaps, what provoked both Salomé Ureña (1850-97) and Francisco Sellén (1836-1907) to write their respective *indianista* works: *Anacaona* (1880) and *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos* (1891).¹¹¹

Dominican Nationalism and Salomé Ureña de Henríquez's *Anacaona* (1880)

Dominican poet, feminist, educator, and patriot Salomé Ureña de Henríquez (1850-97) first adapted the *Anacaona*'s myth in her 1880 epic poem. Ureña was the daughter of Dominican poet Nicolás Ureña de Mendoza (1822-75) and began publishing herself at the age of seventeen. She was also a member of the Dominican intelligentsia and in 1870, married journalist, essayist, and diplomat Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal (1859-1935), who was briefly president of the Dominican Republic in 1916. Ureña was a life-long educator and in 1881, founded the all-female school Instituto de Señoritas, acting as its director until her 1897 death. (Posthumously, the school was renamed after her. A statue of Ureña was erected in Santo Domingo's "Plaza de Poesía" and she and her son Pedro Henríquez Ureña [1884-1946] appear on the current 500 peso Dominican Republic bill.)

Anacaona is Ureña's only epic poem. While it recounts Las Casas' version of the *cacica*'s story, poetic license fills in the historical gaps. Its nostalgic and patriotic sentiments, however, align with its style, nationalist in tone, and contemplates its future, represented best perhaps by her better-known poems *La gloria del progreso* (1873) and

¹¹¹ While the present analysis focuses upon Ureña's and Sellén's works, other *indianista* texts that focus upon or mention *Anacaona* and *Hatuey* include the following: Felix Francisco Rodríguez's *romance* "Anacaona" (1893); Pedro Verges Vidal's *Anacaona* (1947); José Joaquín Pérez's "El voto de Anacaona" in *Fantasías indígenas* (1877); and Francisco Javier Angulo Guridi's *Iguaniona* (1867).

La fe en el porvenir (1878). As such, the poetic voice delves into intimate conversations between *caciques* and Spaniards and reveals Anacaona's internal world. Higuemamota,¹¹² the daughter who falls in love with *conquistador* Hernando de Guevara, is yet another central figure in the poem. Anacaona's final moments, an important piece absent in Las Casas' chronicles, are also fictionalized.

The poem is divided into 39 cantos ranging in meter and rhyme. Ureña employs the *romance*—octosyllabic verses with assonant rhyme—in roughly half of them (16 cantos). The *romance*—or ballad—was characteristic of Spanish oral tradition and became popular throughout the Hispanic world between the 13th and 15th centuries. Ureña employs it for narrative sequences ranging in themes. The poem begins with a description of Quisqueya, a virgin land whose inhabitants live happy, peaceful lives. Caonabo¹¹³ falls in love with Anacaona, the island's most beautiful and good-natured woman. Before marriage, Anacaona enters a sacred cavern in order to connect with Zemí—the Taíno supreme god—just as an oracle predicts the island's imminent destruction.¹¹⁴ The Taínos are initially fearsome, yet soon return to happy lives until the Spaniards arrive. Roughly following historical facts, the poem tells how Guacanagarix, *cacique* of the Marién territory, offers Cristóbal Colón and his men refuge and they establish *La Navidad*. Caonabo distrusts the Spaniards and leads an attack that destroys the settlement.¹¹⁵ With the arrival of more Spaniards, a battle ensues and Taínos defend their land.¹¹⁶ Caonabo and his men retreat in order to plan a counterattack with the other *caciques*, excluding

¹¹² Ureña uses a different spelling for her name. It is spelled “Higuemota” in Las Casas' chronicles.

¹¹³ In Ureña's version, she spells “Caonabo” without an accent on the final “o.”

¹¹⁴ “pero al mirarle adivinan/ que suerte fatal amaga/ con males y con horrores/ a la aborigene raza” (Canto III, 248-9).

¹¹⁵ “Gritos de muerte cruzan los aires,/ cercan los indios la *Navidad*,/ ardientes llamas al cielo suben/ todo es horrores, ruina mortal” (her emphasis, Canto VIII, 259).

¹¹⁶ “Combate el hispano que fiero pretende/ al yugo una raza benéfica uncir;/ mas ¡ay! que el indígena altivo defiende/ su choza, sus selvas, su libre existir” (Canto XI, 264).

Guacanagarix, who remains allied to the Spaniards. Alonso de Ojeda offers an alliance to Caonabo, who rejects it and Anacaona worries that her husband will fall. In a battle between Caonabo and Ojeda, the *cacique* is captured and sent to Colón, whereupon he threatens the Almirante.¹¹⁷ While in transit to Spain, the oracle's prophecy is thus fulfilled when Caonabo dies in a shipwreck.¹¹⁸ Bohechío continues to fight the Spaniards until Anacaona convinces him to stop.¹¹⁹ The Xaraguá (Jaraguá) territory lives in relative calm while other regions become enslaved to the Spanish gold tax. Bartolomé Colón, Cristóbal's brother, visits Bohechío and is greeted by a feast. The *cacique* explains to Bartolomé that no gold has been found in the Xaraguá region and the Spaniard leaves them in peace. However, the destruction of other territories saddens Bohechío, who eventually dies of heartbreak.¹²⁰

Anacaona becomes eventually Xaraguá's new *cacica* and keeps the peace.¹²¹ Higuenamota grows up and meets Hernando de Guevara, a *conquistador*. The two fall in love and Guevara baptizes the young Taíno princess in order to marry her. Anacaona gives them her blessing, believing this union will bring lasting peace, and Guevara and Higuenamota thus become the first interracial couple in the New World. The moment Colón hears news of the nuptials, he orders Francisco Roldán to annul the marriage. In the end, Nicolás de Ovando and his men visit Anacaona and the Xaraguá people welcome the Spaniards. Amidst the festivities, however, Ovando attacks the villagers and only a

¹¹⁷ "Ahora teme si algún día/ libre a mis bosques yo vuelvo;/ que no quedará ni rastro/ de tu dominio en mi suelo" (Canto XVIII, 280).

¹¹⁸ "hasta que en triste día/ la predicción fatídica/ templando oyó la grey" (Canto XIX, 284).

¹¹⁹ "No, que si amigo a su encuentro vamos/ y la paz le ofrecemos sin rencores,/ el poder y la vida conservamos/ y alzarse no podrán como señores" (Canto XXII, 293).

¹²⁰ "Languideció su alma,/ vió dilatarse el porvenir sombrío,/ y paz buscando y perdurable calma/ pidió al sepulcro su descanso frío" (Canto XXVII, 301).

¹²¹ "Todo es paz en los dominios/ que custodia diligente,/ con espíritu prudente/ de Concordia y de perdón/ y su trato, de dulzura/ majestad y gracia lleno,/ es un dique al desenfreno/ criminal del invasor" (Canto XXVIII, 302).

handful of Taínos escape. Anacaona survives, but after witnessing such destruction, and wishing for her death,¹²² she is hung publicly in the Taíno's final defeat.¹²³

Despite Ureña's popularity within the Dominican Republic, this poem has not been studied to any great extent. Indeed, a review of previous scholarship reveals that the poem only appears in a handful of doctoral dissertations, one of them offering a stylistic and thematic analysis of the poem.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, *Anacaona* is an important piece in Dominican literature and relative to the present study precisely because Ureña succeeded in keeping the memory of Anacaona's death alive amongst her fellow Dominicans, thus reviving the *cacica*'s myth and infusing it with a nationalist overtone during a time of nation-building. Ureña's poetic voice assumes the Amerindian point-of-view. While Spaniards appear and engage in brief dialogue, they are not the central focus of the story, thus their own internal world is never exposed. Indeed, throughout the poem Cristóbal Colón himself remains an enigma; though certainly present in several scenes, he never speaks. The only time the reader comes close to this character is after Caonabo is captured and Colón displays fear towards the *cacique*: "La firmeza del cacique/ Colón admira en silencio,/ tanta altivez respetando,/ tanto valor y denuedo./ Pero a tan fuerte enemigo/ aunque cautivo temiendo/ medita a solas y ordena/ vigilar al prisionero" (Canto XVIII, 280-1). Evidently, all Spaniards, with the exception of Hernando de Guevara, who ultimately repents for his wrongdoings, appear in a negative light: "De la virtud al

¹²² "Así en oscura cárcel estrecha/ no siente en ansia de libertad,/ que el alma inquieta sólo a la tumba/ pide el descanso, pide la paz" (Canto XXXVIII, 325).

¹²³ "Tristísima una nube cruzó la azul esfera/ cubriendo con sus velos la luz del nuevo sol;/ después... a sus destellos cumplida celebraba/ su hazaña el español" (Canto XXXIX, 326).

¹²⁴ These include: René C. Izquierdo's "'Anacaona' de Salome Ureña de Henríquez, poema épico sobre la conquista de América: Un análisis estilístico y temático" (1991); John K. Echols' "Indianism: The Construction of the Image of Indigenous Peoples in Nineteenth-Century Mexican, Peruvian, and Dominican Literature" (1998); and Marveta M. Ryan's "Race, Culture, and Nation in Late Nineteenth-Century Poetry from the Dominican Republic" (1999).

camino/ por tu amor volveré ufano,/ yo que en loco desatino/ busqué placers en vano/ del mundo en el torbellino” (Canto XXX, 308). Much as we saw in Las Casas’ versión, Spanish and Taíno representations are juxtaposed in order to create a number of dichotomies: foreigner/native; evil/good; sinful/pure; dark/light,¹²⁵ respectively. Ureña perceives the Conquest as a violation of the Taínos’ natural rights. She depicts Anacaona, Caonabo, and Bohechío as victims who are forced to resist and protect their territories.¹²⁶

While Anacaona is hardly the poem’s sole focus, her character unites narrative action. Each moment in the story, for example, coincides with a specific point in her life. For this reason, Destiny is peppered all through the text as the poetic voice leads its audience towards a predictable ending. Thus the poem begins as Anacaona enters adulthood—coinciding with the arrival of the Spaniards—and ends as she falls at the hands of her aggressors. Further, as Caonabo and his army fight against the invasion, Anacaona brings joy to the Maguana people in a time of peril. Additionally, she comforts Caonabo by offering her counsel, and after his death she offers similar counsel to Bohechío. After her brother’s death, she becomes *cacica* and maintains a nonaggressive stance towards the Spaniards. Her stance leads ultimately to her sacrifice, and it is her death, not Hatuey’s, that leads to Taíno destruction. And yet, Anacaona’s sacrifice is predicted from the outset. It is no coincidence that the oracle foresees Xaraguá’s destruction on the exact day Anacaona is to be married. Ureña intends for Anacaona’s biography, then, to be a metaphor of the Spanish Conquest and the island’s destruction.

¹²⁵ Light imagery accompanies the Taínos throughout the text. Most notably, the poem commences with the image of the Taíno nation born from light and concludes with an image of that same light extinguished: “Tendida en las espumas/ del piélago sonoro,/ nacida al rayo de oro/ del éter tropical” and “Tristísima una nube cruzó la azul esfera/ cubriendo con sus velos la luz del nuevo sol...” (Canto I, 241, and Canto XXXIX, respectively, 326).

¹²⁶ Although Caonabo causes destruction, his actions are noble, for he would have never chosen violence without such provocation. Guacanagarix, on the other hand, is a coward who sides with evil.

As in Las Casas' version, she is a symbol of indigenous injustice whose myth warns of the evils inflicted by the Spanish Conquest.

And yet, *Anacaona* does depart from Las Casas' version in several respects. To begin with, Ureña adds much more detail to Anacaona's story in order to understand the *cacica*'s joy and then suffering before and after the Spaniards' arrival. Anacaona and Caonabo's romance also becomes an important aspect of this version, and her suffering after his death becomes the focus, an element, perhaps, that Ureña felt the myth underemphasized. Higuenamota also becomes an important element. Although mentioned only briefly in Las Casas' *Historia de las Indias* (Volume I), no historical document confirms her whereabouts after Anacaona's death; Ureña speculates no further. She does, however, celebrate Higuenamota's participation in the island's first interracial marriage. As Ureña imagines Higuenamota and Hernando de Guevara's meeting, she mentions that he had repented for his sins against the Amerindian peoples. This, perhaps, was also a critique of the myth, in which the Spaniards are relentlessly demonized for their malicious behavior. Indeed, perhaps Ureña felt it unnecessary to incite the "Black Legend," thereby avoiding subjecting all Spaniards to one stereotype.

While Ureña's motivations for writing *Anacaona* remain unclear, the poem's publication, one must note, coincides with important nationalist movements within the Dominican Republic. After regaining independence from Spain in the 1863-5 War of Restoration (*Guerra de la Restauración*), the Dominican Republic became divided among dozens of caudillos. By 1879, twenty-one changes of government and at least fifty military uprisings that resulted from a steady conflict between the conservative *Partido Rojo*, whose leader Buenaventura Báez sought annexation to the U.S., and the liberal

Partido Azul (Moya Pons 222). Puerto Rican Eugenio María Hostos (1839-1903) arrived to the Dominican Republic in 1875 and was himself highly influential in the Dominican intellectual community. The Henríquez Ureñas established ties and helped ingrain his liberalism into the *Partido Azul*'s nationalist, democratic mission. While few readings of the poem or its influences upon the intellectual community exist,¹²⁷ it seems clear that Ureña chose Anacaona as a symbol of nationalist loyalty and of the sacrifices that accompany such a struggle. The *cacica* represents resistance to foreign subjugation, a reality the Dominican political atmosphere of the late 1800s itself faced. Anacaona's demise represented the detrimental outcome of such an invasion. By eliciting Dominican historical memory, Ureña thus applied the Anacaona myth to a contemporary context in hopes of uniting the intellectual community towards a nationalist cause, a tactic later mimicked by Cuban separatists who incited the Hatuey myth during the Cuban Wars of Independence.

Hatuey in the Cuban Independence Period: 1868-1902

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (1819-74), an elite Creole who had studied in Havana and Madrid, participating in several separatist rebellions, and was owner of the Cuban sugar mill La Demajagua,¹²⁸ led Cuba's first cry for independence from Spain on October 10, 1868, in what is commonly referred to as "El Grito de Yara." It was called that because it occurred in the Yara, Oriente region, precisely where 300 years before Hatuey had been burned at the stake. The 1850s and 60s had been tumultuous years in Cuba. The

¹²⁷ As Marveta Ryan has pointed out: "In 1893, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo praised [José Joaquín] Pérez and Ureña as the best representatives of 'true poetry' in Santo Domingo (II: lxxxix). In their theses on each of these poets, René Izquierdo (60, 69, 214) and Doralina Martínez-Conde (10-11) point out the nationalist intentions of 'Anacaona' and *Fantasías indígenas*, respectively...Furthermore, a comprehensive examination of a Dominican Indianist literature has yet to appear" ("Border-Line Anxiety" 31).

¹²⁸ In time, *La Demajagua* became the Cuban Communist Party's bilingual (Spanish/English) newspaper in the Granma Province.

1857 economic crisis closed several sugar mill plantations and an influx of African slaves during a time of abolitionism forced Cuban élites to demand social and economic reforms from Spain,¹²⁹ then amidst its own liberal rebellion. And yet, the Spanish court's unwillingness to compromise fueled separatist sentiments. On the morning of that October 10th (or so the story goes), Céspedes gathered his slaves together and freed them before urging them to participate in Cuba's independence movement.¹³⁰ Céspedes then made a formal proclamation, "El Manifiesto del 10 de octubre,"¹³¹ raised the new independent Cuban flag, rang the sugar mill bell in order to solidify his decree, and signed the manifesto along with sixteen other members of the Creole élite.¹³² Spanish Captain Francisco de Lersundi y Hormaechea assured Spain that the revolt would be suppressed within days. Yet ten years and thirteen generals later, the fight still ensued. In 1878, Spanish officials finally opened up to negotiations with the island rebels, and the two parties reached and promulgated the Zanjón Pact on February 10, 1878,¹³³ thus ending the so-called Ten Years War.

¹²⁹ These included tariff reforms, Cuban representation in the Spanish Parliament, judicial equality, and a ban on slave trade.

¹³⁰ Historian Ada Ferrer offers a list of references for more information about that day's events: Bartolomé Masó Márquez's "Copia del parte del pronunciamiento efectuado en la Demajagua en Manzanillo..." in the *Boletín del Archivo Nacional*, v. 53-55 (1954-1955, p. 142-145); and Emilio Bacardí y Moreau's *Crónicas de Santiago de Cuba*, Madrid, Breogan, 1908, 4: 42.

¹³¹ For a copy of the Manifest, see <http://www.autentico.org/oa09138.php>.

¹³² Those who signed included: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Jaime M. Santiesteban, Bartolomé Masó, Juan Hall, Francisco J. Céspedes, Pedro Céspedes, Manuel Calvar, Isaías Masó, Eduardo Suástegui, Miguel Suástegui, Rafael Tornés, Manuel Santiesteban, Manuel Socarrás, Agustín Valerino, Rafael Masó, and Eligio Izaguirre.

¹³³ The Pact included 6 items: 1) the Cuban army must surrender to the Spanish; 2) they must accept the separatists' defeat; 3) Cubans must recognize Spain's jurisdiction on the island; 4) they must form political parties that cooperate with Spain; 5) only slaves that fought in the war would be freed; and 6) Cubans are allowed freedom of speech and the right to assemble as long as these rights are not used to organize attacks on Spain. Antonio Maceo did not accept the Pact's terms because it omitted the abolition of slavery and Cuban independence. In what is referred to as the "Protest of Baraguá," which took place on March 16, 1878, Maceo met with Arsenio Martínez Campos in Baraguá in order to discuss the Zanjón Pact. As the two could not come to an agreement, Maceo announced that independence fights would resume after an eight-day truce. As Hugh Thomas explained, Maceo's protest, "excited general enthusiasm and made Maceo a hero throughout America" yet, ultimately, he was unable to revive forces in time to fight Martínez

The U.S. expatriate community was an important revolutionary force during the Wars of Cuban Independence; Key West, Florida hosted one of the largest, and most active, communities.¹³⁴ The Zanjón Pact did not end this community's independence efforts. In fact, despite an economic recession in the 1870s that forced many to leave Key West,¹³⁵ revolutionary activity continued to flourish and Hatuey's and Céspedes' images became reignited, now as a symbol of Cuban separatism. On October 12, 1878, two days shy of the tenth anniversary of the "Grito de Yara," José Dolores Poyo, a prominent exile community leader, created the separatist periodical *El Yara*, whose name recalled both Céspedes' famous cry and the site of Hatuey's death. The periodical was pertinent to the separatist movement and provided a space to revitalize revolutionary sentiments, as the Zanjón Pact attempted to pacify them.¹³⁶ The Key West separatists worked alongside the other émigré communities in the U.S.¹³⁷ By August 1879, rebellions had erupted in central and eastern Cuba.¹³⁸ The Generals García, Antonio Maceo, and Emilio Núñez launched an expedition in the spring of 1879. Logistical errors led to a brief insurgency and the rebels surrendered in September 1879 in what is known as *La Guerra Chiquita*.

Campos (267). He left the island shortly after the "Protest" and the Cuban government had accepted the Zanjón Pact by July.

¹³⁴ As historian Gerald E. Poyo has noted, "Key West became central to the separatist cause through a patriotic and dedicated populace, able and spirited local leaders, and a prosperous cigar industry that provided the necessary financial resources to support the revolution..." (20).

¹³⁵ Many had to return to Havana or other U.S. cities, such as Jacksonville, Florida or New York City.

¹³⁶ Poyo has noted, "*El Yara* became a symbol of the dedication and selflessness with which the Latin colony in south Florida continued to agitate for Cuban independence" (21).

¹³⁷ In 1878, General Calixto García, a prominent force in the Ten Years War, organized the *Comité Revolucionario Cubano* in New York while Key West separatists formed the *Club Revolucionario Cubano de Cayo Hueso*. Other important groups included *Club Hijos de la Libertad*, founded by Rosario Lamadriz, L. Piedad Figueredo, and Clara, Celia, and América Poyo. These women were sisters and wives to the revolutionary leaders José Francisco Lamadriz (New York), Fernando Figueredo (Key West), and José Dolores Poyo (Key West), respectively.

¹³⁸ There were also worker's strikes in Key West's cigar industry that dwindled the revolution's economic force. General García and José Francisco Lamadriz travelled from New York to Key West to settle the strikes and continue rallying support. Lamadriz stayed in Key West, while the unknown José Martí took his position on the New York *Comité's* board of directors. Little did they know he would become the voice of Cuban Independence years later.

Despite this set-back, *El Yara* continued to rally support for Independence¹³⁹ and the periodical was smuggled into Cuba, allowing rebels on the island to stay in touch with exiles. Ten Years War veteran Fernando Figueredo¹⁴⁰ arrived to Key West in 1880 and, along with Lamadriz and Poyo, became an influential community leader who chronicled his experience in *La Revolución de Yara* (1885).¹⁴¹ Figueredo referenced once again to the Yara region upon founding the short-lived newspaper *La Voz de Hatuey*, a fitting name indeed, as the periodical's aggressiveness prompted complaints from both the Spanish ambassador in Washington as well as the U.S. press, which criticized its "advocacy of violence against Spaniards in Key West" (Poyo 25-6). Figueredo's periodical was not the only one that cited Hatuey's image in direct relation to independence activities. In fact, separatists often referenced Hatuey and other Amerindian figures that fought against the Spanish Conquest. José Martí, for example, makes the following references in his *Fragmentos* (written in New York between 1885-95): "Con Guaicaipuro, Paramaconi, con *Anacaona*, con *Hatuey* hemos de estar, y no con las llamas que los quemaron, ni con las cuerdas que los ataron, ni con los aceros que los degollaron, ni con los perros que los mordieron." (my emphasis, 27; vol. XXII). Separately, Puerto Rican Eugenio María de Hostos had made an almost identical reference in his essay "Cuba y Puerto Rico" (1872): "...leo la historia de la conquista en cualquier parte de América, y la sed de justicia me devora y el hambre de venganza me

¹³⁹ As Gerard E. Poyo noted, "The dispersed Cubans relied on the Key West weekly for news of conspirational organizing and gained inspiration from the patriotic exhortations of prominent figures like Maceo who contributed to its columns" (25).

¹⁴⁰ Figueredo became actively involved in Florida politics, and even become the first elected Cuban in the state legislature, becoming mayor of the city in 1884.

¹⁴¹ A series of lectures that he presented at Key West's Club San Carlos.

exaspera, y me siento Bayoán, Caonabo, *Hatuey*, Guatimozón, Atahualpa, Colocolo” (my emphasis, 188).

Although *Hatuey* and Yara were commonly referenced during this period, the first work to focus exclusively upon the *cacique*’s myth was Cuban separatist Francisco Sellén’s 1891 play *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos*. Sellén (1836-1907) was known mostly for his poetry and his militancy in the Cuban independence movement. He contributed frequently to various national newspapers, even founding the bilingual publication *Heraldo Cubano* with his brother Antonio. He was a member of Céspedes’ 1868 rebellion and, subsequently, was deported to Spain for stashing artillery. In 1869 he escaped to New York City, where he enlisted in the revolutionary expedition “*Los cazadores de Hatuey*” and reached the level of captain. In a letter (June 15, 1869) to José Morales Lémus, revolutionary Emilia Casanova de Villaverde described this expedition: “Informada que en breve debe partir para Cuba una nueva expedición conduciendo armas y municiones de guerra a nuestros bravos compatriotas y que el C. Dotuingo Goicouría es caudillo de ella, acompañándole una compañía de patriotas cubanos bajo la denominación de ‘Cazadores de Hatuey’...” (43). While the expedition ultimately failed, Sellén returned to New York City in order to continue working as a journalist. In 1882, he and José Martí founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party.

Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos was published in New York between the second and third Wars of Independence: the *Guerra Chiquita* (1879-80) and the Cuban War of Independence (1895-8), respectively. As its title suggests, the play’s five acts follow Gustav Freytag’s theory of dramatic structure¹⁴²: introduction, rise, climax, return

¹⁴² While Freytag used this originally to analyze Greek and Shakespearian drama, it can be employed in other contexts.

or fall, and catastrophe. First is the introduction—“presuppos[ition] for the action” in the form of a prologue (Freytag 115)—which in Sellén’s play is structured as an *areíto*: reminiscent of a Greek tragedy chorus, the Taíno *behique*—or shaman—provides the audience with background information on the Spanish Conquest of Quisqueya and Hatuey’s arrival in Cuba. What Freytag calls the “exiting force”¹⁴³ also occurs here, where Hatuey stops the *areíto* in order to warn the Taínos of the Spaniards’ arrival to the island. The second act, which constitutes Freytag’s “rising movement,”¹⁴⁴ takes place in the Spanish camps, where the villain—Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar—schemes to capture and kill Hatuey. The third act provides the climax as well as the romantic component. Freytag explains that this is when “the results of the rising movement come out strong and decisively” (128). Atabaiba, a young Taíno girl, falls in love with Diego de Ordaz, a Spanish *conquistador*, after saving his life. Tensions rise when she agrees innocently to lead him to Hatuey.¹⁴⁵ In the fourth act, the falling action, or the “force of the final suspense” (Freytag 135), the Taínos celebrate an alleged defeat over the Spaniards, unaware that Atabaiba has told Ordaz where their jungle camp is located. The fifth and final act, the closing action, or “catastrophe” (Freytag 137), stages Hatuey’s capture and Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas’ demands and denial to hold off his execution. The *cacique* is burned at the stake.

Like Salomé Ureña de Henríquez’s *Anacaona*, Sellén’s drama has been the subject of little critical analysis. And yet, it is clear that he did disseminate the play. Raúl

¹⁴³ According to Freytag, this is “...the excited action (complication) [which] occurs at a point where, in the soul of the hero, there arises a feeling or volition which becomes the occasion of what follows...” (121).

¹⁴⁴ According to Freytag, the “rising movement” is when both sides have now shown their motivations and their emotions have converted into action” (125).

¹⁴⁵ It is clear that Atabaina never schemed against Hatuey. In fact, when she visits the *cacique*’s jail cell she falls to his feet and begs for forgiveness: “Soy inocente: compasión yo tuve...Yo le amé...joven soy...” (114).

C. Galván's research on Cuban émigré Rafael Serra y Montalvo (1858-1909), for example, has uncovered a letter written from Serra to Sellén thanking the poet for sending him a copy of *Hatuey*: "The drama *Hatuey* deserves applause and admiration, and cannot be criticized by your friend and countryman, R. Serra" (qtd. in García 132). As in Ureña's version of the Anacaona myth, Sellén also imagines *Hatuey*'s internal world, thus creating a deeper vision of the *cacique* than Las Casas' version of the myth offers. Fatal Destiny also becomes an important dramatic trope. In the first act, for example, *Hatuey* predicts the Amerindian demise: "De los nuestros saciar, cual si nacidos/Fuéramos sólo para el hombre blanco" (9). This is accompanied by images of fire and betrayal that allude to *Hatuey*'s death when the Anciano states: "Y a caciques y naitanos/Morir he visto en las llamas..." and "¡En ceniza los convierta/El fuego, cual seca yagua!" (20). Velázquez de Cuéllar himself alludes to Atabaiba's betrayal when he states: "Mas tal vez los prisioneros/Que à nuestro campo ahora llegan/Den informes que nos sirvan/Al intento" (40). As an *indianista* text, Sellén redirects this notion of Destiny towards Cuban Independence efforts as he explains in the drama's prologue that *Hatuey* represents not only the aspirations of the Antilles, but of the entire American Continent: "El destino nos fu[e] adverso; pero se proclamó una vez más en la historia de la comunidad de intereses, de principios y de aspiraciones, no solo de las Antillas, sino de todos los pueblos del Continente Americano" (1).

Betrayal as a theme is one of the more interesting additions to this version of the *Hatuey* myth. It occurs during the story's climax, when Atabaiba unknowingly betrays *Hatuey*. While it is unclear why Sellén made this addition, as explained by Freytag, a

powerful climax was essential for creating a more violent downfall for the play's hero.¹⁴⁶ As such, the shock of betrayal segued perfectly into the play's final moments, when Las Casas produces the Spanish King's decree to stop the execution, only to be told it comes too late; Hatuey has already been burned at the stake.¹⁴⁷ Had Atabaiba not told Ordaz where Hatuey was hiding, the decree would have arrived on time, thus preventing the *cacique*'s execution. Thus, while the scene has overt Judas-like qualities, a feminist reading might view Atabaiba's sexuality as a recreation of the biblical Eve: Atabaiba (Eve) falls innocently into Ordaz's (the snake's, the Devil's) trap. Yet quite apart from dramatic tension, Atabaiba could have also been necessary in order to create the staple Romantic love affair. Or perhaps Atabaiba's innocent nature juxtaposed with Ordaz's deceit is used in order to reinforce Las Casas' good and evil binary. Yet another reasoning behind the inclusion could have been to fill in the blanks of Las Casas' chronicle version, which never does explain how Hatuey was captured and is, perhaps, used to critique the myth. More specifically, the betrayal appears to answer the question as to *how* such a powerful *cacique* could have fallen to the Spaniards. Indeed, as we will see next, the inclusion of a traitor in this version affected César Rodríguez Expósito's later 1944 version, which incorporates a similar critique.

While Ureña's intentions for writing *Anacaona* remain unclear, Sellén states explicitly why he wrote his play:

¹⁴⁶ "The more powerful the climax, the more violent the downfall of the hero, so much the more vividly must the end be felt in advance; the less the dramatic power of the poet in the middle of the piece, the more pains will he take toward the end, and the more will he seek to make use of striking effects" (Freytag 135).

¹⁴⁷ As Freytag explains, the hero (Hatuey) has to die in order to complete his purpose: "The more profound the strife which has gone forward in the hero's soul, the more noble its purpose has been, so much more logical will the destruction of the succumbing hero be. And the warning must be given here, that the poet should not allow himself to be misled by modern tender-heartedness, to spare the life of his hero on the stage" (137).

En los albores de nuestra historia se destaca, imponente, la heroica figura de Hatuey. La hoguera que consumió su cuerpo ha brillado desde entonces, a manera de faro, para los sedientos de justicia y libertad, para los anhelosos de la independencia de la patria cubana. Hatuey se ha convertido en encarnación de una idea: es el precursor de esos hijos de Quisqueya, de Borinquén, del Anahuac y de todas las regiones de nuestra América que—animados del levantado espíritu que condujo al indomable cacique a expiar en las llamas el crimen de defender los derechos de su raza, la independencia de un suelo hermano...En las escenas de este drama he intentado bosquejar la figura legendaria del que fu[e] en un tiempo cacique de Guajaba...(6).

Sellén's goal was to use Hatuey's myth in order to reinforce the desire for Cuban independence. The *cacique*'s symbol in the Cuban collective memory would keep the drive for Independence alive. Hence, Sellén referred to it as a dramatic re-creation of Hatuey's myth that emphasized his symbolism, rather than a strictly historical account. While it is unknown whether or not Sellén's play was ever performed, it can be assumed that its intended audience was the exiled community in New York City and Key West (as demonstrated by the letter from Serra). As Cuba's progeny, separatists were obliged to honor their Taíno ancestor's death by achieving the independence that Hatuey never attained.¹⁴⁸ As José Juan Arrom stated: "Sobre ese fondo histórico se destaca la figura de

¹⁴⁸ "Hatuey se ha convertido en encarnación de una idea: es el precursor de esos hijos de Quisqueya, de Borinquén, del Anahuac y de todas las regiones de nuestra América que—animados del levantado espíritu que condujo al indomable cacique [a] expiar en las llamas el crimen de defender los derechos de su raza, la independencia de un suelo hermano—corrieron [a] verter su sangre generosa en los campos de Cuba cuando ésta, con las armas en la mano, aspiró también [a] un puesto entre las naciones libres de este nuevo mundo. El destino nos fu[e] adverso; pero se proclamó una vez más en la historia la comunidad de

Hatuey en forma tal, que resulta éste ser un patriota cubano de fines del siglo XIX anacrónicamente transportado al siglo XVI. El rebelde indio antillano es así Sellén mismo, sintiendo aún el escozor de la pasada Guerra de los Diez Años y listo para lanzarse a la próxima Guerra de Independencia” (*Historia* 67).

Hatuey and Post-Independence Cuba: César Rodríguez Expósito’s *Hatuey: el primer libertador de Cuba* (1944)

Despite forming an integral part of 19th-century independence movements, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths recurred in 20th- and 21st-century versions. César Rodríguez Expósito’s (1904-72) historical novel *Hatuey: el primer libertador de Cuba* (1944) was the first instance since Las Casas’ chronicles that the *cacique*’s myth was adapted to prose. Naturally, its publication almost half a century after Cuban Independence prompts inquiry into why Rodríguez Expósito chose to revisit this myth. In his prologue, the author cites two important documents that were adopted in Havana’s 1942 *Primer Congreso Nacional de Historia*: Acts number 31, “Recomendar a los Poderes Públicos de la República que por los diversos medios a su alcance perpetúen el recuerdo de la actitud digna, viril y muchas veces heroica de los indígenas cubanos frente a los conquistadores españoles”; and number 32, “Recomendar a la Sociedad Cubana de Estudios Históricos e Internacionales que realice los estudios necesarios para aclarar definitivamente quién fu[e] el primer indio que en Cuba hizo activa resistencia a los invasores españoles” (28). The latter, in particular, prompted Rodríguez Expósito to research Hatuey’s myth in order to revive a seemingly forgotten figure.¹⁴⁹

intereses, de principios y de aspiraciones, no sólo de las Antillas, sino de todos los pueblos del Continente Americano. Y en este concepto, el sublime sacrificio no habrá sido estéril” (5-6)

¹⁴⁹ “Hatuey es una figura extraordinaria—y olvidada por los cubanos--, por eso he querido rendir un justo tributo de recuerdo a su memoria con este apunte biográfico” (Rodríguez Expósito 29).

Indeed, the *Primer Congreso* had occurred during the second year of Fulgencio Batista's legitimate first presidential period (1940-4), a full two decades before Fidel Castro and Che Guevara brought down his illegitimate second regime. While Batista himself did not become president until 1940, he was behind a string of puppet presidents, starting with the 1933 coup against Gerardo Machado's dictatorship. Batista had a hand in Cuba's transition from a military dictatorship in 1934 to the 1940 constitutional democracy, when the nation's constitution was rewritten along nationalist lines. From 1934-7, Batista's primary support came from the military and police; however, from 1937 to 40, he forewent a "populist phase,"¹⁵⁰ in which he incited nationalist sentiment in order to gain support from "the people." The Cuban worker took center stage, and Batista's measures along the lines of the new constitution included establishing an eight-hour workday, minimum wage, social security, maternity leave, and replacement of foreign workers with national ones, among others, which culminated in his 1937 *Líneas básicas del Programa del Plan Trienal* (Three Year Plan), in which he "promised the *clases populares* what they wanted" (his emphasis, Whitney 445). The Sugar Coordination Law was at the center of Batista's populist strategy. The law sought to regulate the sugar industry in favor of the worker, which in the previous 37 years had fallen victim to oligarchic capitalism.¹⁵¹ In order to gain the support of union workers, whose distrust in government officials had stemmed from a violent repression during 1934-6, Batista and

¹⁵⁰ As Robert Whitney has noted, "Populism arose as a political and economic response to the growth of a mass work force which had been released from traditional personalistic and clientelist ties of bondage and dependence. Populists acknowledged that 'the masses' were a new force in society and that 'the people' were at the centre of the nation and the state. Populist discourse, in other words, functioned to construct 'the people' out of fragmented and scattered populations" (439).

¹⁵¹ "Batista hoped to promote a more balanced sugar economy by organising a profit-sharing system among producers (both large and small), labour and the state. The state anticipated paying for the social aspects of the Plan with the revenue generated from its share of the profits" (Whitney 444-5).

the Communist Party of Cuba formed an alliance.¹⁵² By the 1940 elections, Batista drew support from all groups.¹⁵³ Despite the Communist Party of Cuba's endorsement of Batista's first presidency, ongoing during World War II, his pro-U.S. (or Allied) stance formed a close political partnership. Indeed, Cuba declared war against the Axis Powers immediately after Pearl Harbor.¹⁵⁴ By 1944, Batista had also denounced Francisco Franco's fascist regime (1939-75) in Spain, exclaiming that the United Nation's decision to intervene would bring "total ovation for the Allied cause throughout all Latin America" ("Plain Talk in Spanish," *Time Magazine*, December 23, 1942). The partnership with the Allies was largely economically-driven: Cuba's sugar industry benefitted from U.S. economic cooperation and sugar shortages throughout Europe.¹⁵⁵ Given the *Primer Congreso*'s agenda—and historical positioning—its nationalist overtones come as no surprise; Cuba was experiencing economic prosperity for the first time in decades. Juan Marinello, at the time Communist leader president, boasted that "Batista would be the 'first president of Cuba' able to say on leaving office that 'his electoral promises had not been inflated boasts but were drawn from the impulse of popular service'" (qtd. in Thomas 728-9). Thus motivated by the *Primer Congreso*'s

¹⁵² This alliance seemed unusual given Batista's 1934-7 suppression of unions. And yet, as Hugh Thomas noted, the Communist Party of Cuba's agreement to work with Batista was part of a global movement: "the decision to seek an alliance with Batista fits the pattern of the worldwide turn of the communist movement toward popular front tactics" (450).

¹⁵³ As Thomas also noted, "The day that Batista took office a casual traveller in Havana would have thought the Saviour had indeed come. The bands, the artillery salutes, the crowds in the streets, the president on the balcony—the atmosphere was one of carnival and optimism... Batista began his presidency in the happy position of being supported by representatives of all classes, capitalists and Communists" (724).

¹⁵⁴ Thomas noted that on December 9, 1941, "...the Cuban Congress declared war against Japan, and on 11 December Cuba declared war also against Germany and Italy" (729).

¹⁵⁵ As Thomas noted, "Cuba was then the sixth most important exporter to the U.S. There were no restrictions in U.S.-Cuban trade and Cuba was the best field for U.S. investments in Latin America... The U.S. Department of State therefore believed that the time had come for a 'broad programme of economic co-operation', and proposed that the Export-Import Bank should immediately give credit to Cuba..." (726-7). On Europe, he noted, "Russia by this time [1941] also required Cuban sugar, since the Ukrainian beet fields had fallen to Germany" (728).

nationalist push, Rodríguez Expósito explains that he took on the difficult task of recreating Hatuey's myth in a work he also dedicated to the Cuban president.¹⁵⁶

Rodríguez Expósito was a journalist, playwright, and academic who in 1951 became the official Historian of the *Ministerio de Salud Pública*. *Hatuey* was the author's first historical text and, as historian Elías Entralgo notes in the prologue, this retelling often exposes a sense of naiveté with regard to the profession: "César Rodríguez Expósito ha llegado a la literatura histórica lleno de entusiasmo, que es virtud saludable. Esta inspiración fogosa lo conduce, a ocasiones, hasta la ingenuidad, como cuando, exaltado por su primer contacto con la historia, se asombra, se azora y no puede reprimir un gesto de descubrimiento ante el Descubrimiento" (21). Rodríguez Expósito himself acknowledged the difficulty he faced as a first-time historian: "El historiador se debe a la verdad. No puede ser apasionado" (25). Indeed, he even admitted in the "Author's Note" that recounting Hatuey's story was especially difficult due to lack of documentation. As a result, he laments at having to use his imagination to "fill in the blanks," thus explaining why he insisted on calling the text an "apunte biográfico."¹⁵⁷

While here we call Rodríguez Expósito's a novel, the book's structure is actually a miscellany. The actual historical account is preceded by a prologue, an author's note, and photocopies and transcriptions of the chapter "De la isla de Cuba" from Las Casas' *Brevísima relación* (1552). The historical account is itself only 58 pages long divided into eight chapters, followed by an appendix (three letters from Las Casas), a 30-page notes

¹⁵⁶ In the prologue: "Al Mayor General Fulgencio Batista y Zaldivar, que me estimuló a escribir [e]ste apunte biográfico sobre El Primer Libertador de Cuba" (13).

¹⁵⁷ "Por esa circunstancia quiero denominar [e]ste trabajo, débil intento histórico, como 'apunte biográfico' y no como biografía, pues con los datos obtenidos a través de los historiadores de la época, de los documentos que se conservan en los archivos y con los numerosos libros que se han publicado sobre el pasado de América, he hilvanado estos apuntes, donde puede que en algunas de sus partes hubiera alguna leyenda para completar la unidad de la vida, actuación y muerte de [e]ste personaje que tan brillante página ha escrito en la historia de Cuba y cuya memoria debemos siempre honrar" (28).

section, and a bibliography. Naturally, the addition of historical documents and citations accompanied the author's intention to provide as accurate a historical account as possible. And yet, when isolating the actual adaptation of the Hatuey myth, it becomes clear that much like Ureña and Sellén, Rodríguez Expósito relied heavily on poetic license to fill in the gaps. While it is unclear whether Rodríguez Expósito was chosen for the project, or chose to complete it himself, it can be assumed that his experience as a playwright played an important role in the writing of this version.

Each of the eight chapters focuses upon moments of the Spanish Conquest and Hatuey's life. As the text alternates between Spanish and Taíno perspectives, delving into intimate conversations and inner monologues, it draws parallels: 1) between Conquest and *Reconquista*; and 2) the 16th-century Conquest and Cuba's own national Re-conquest and Independence (1868-1902). In Chapter One, "Gloria de Colón: Vía crucis indio," which recounts the events leading up to Colón's first voyage, the narrator draws the hackneyed parallel between the *Reconquista* of Granada and the *Conquista* of the Antilles.¹⁵⁸ Conquest is painted as an act of Destiny, a recurrent theme. The narrator laments the horrors that would eventually be suffered by the indigenous population. Drawing a parallel between these two historical events thus exposes the irony of the Spanish Conquest; at the exact moment the Spaniards fought to re-conquer their rightful land from the Moors, the *conquistadors* were taking land away from the Taíno indians. This sentiment is mirrored throughout the text, perhaps most notably in Chapter Four¹⁵⁹:

¹⁵⁸ "En la torre de la Vela se arría el pabellón de Baobdil y en su lugar se alza, rebrillando al sol, la cruz de Plata. Abajo rebrillan también las espadas de Castilla y Aragón como símbolos ambas, cruz y espadas, de la Reconquista de España. Símbolos que lo serán también de la conquista de aquel nuevo mundo que Colón va a ofrecer a España ante los muros de Granada... Aquel disparo fu[e] la señal de la Conquista del nuevo mundo en nombre de aquella misma cruz y de la misma espada que rebrillaron juntas al sol en la conquista de Granada" (50-1).

¹⁵⁹ Titled "Albores de la libertad de Cuba."

¡Ironías del Destino...! Mientras Colón atravesó el océano en busca de nuevas tierras, sus habitantes huían llenos de pavor de su propio suelo para no ser víctimas de las atrocidades de los conquistadores, primero; para acometer la reconquista después. ¡Oh paradojas de la Historia! Colón ante Granada esperó largo tiempo a que la reina Isabel la Católica culminase la Reconquista y elevase el lábaro de la cruz sobre la torre del castillo de Baobdil, para que se dispusiese a emprender la aventura del descubrimiento, en nombre también de aquella misma cruz sobre Granada y en nombre de la espada. (83-4)

Chapter Two, “La conquista de América: Ambición de oro,” depicts Colón’s arrival in the Antilles and shows both groups reacting to each other. While Colón is amazed by the New World’s beauty and innocence, the Taínos are intrigued by the foreigners, unaware that they have come to destroy the population. As in previous versions, the good and evil binary opposition becomes established despite having presented the Spaniard’s point of view. In fact, Rodríguez Expósito appears to defend the indigenous population from unflattering descriptions; for example, in one tangent he explains that the Taínos were not lazy; rather, they were not accustomed to unnecessary laborious tasks, such as searching for gold.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, this chapter’s focal point is Spanish lust for gold and their enslavement of the Taíno in its pursuit.

¹⁶⁰ “Los indios cubanos, al igual que los de Haití o Quisqueya o la Española, eran gentes sencillas, hospitalarias, valientes y laboriosas, a pesar de las injustas difamaciones de muchos historiadores que los tildan de holgazanes y cobardes” (63). He also quotes a study by Fernando Ortiz regarding their work ethic: “...pero, como lo son todos los seres biológicos, eran enemigos del ‘sobre-trabajo’, o sea del trabajo total o parcialmente improductivo o donde la recompensa es nula o desproporcionadamente raquítica con la magnitud del esfuerzo empleado” (64).

In Chapter Three, “Hatuey,” which introduces the *cacique*, the narrator, albeit from secondary sources, even offers a physical description of Hatuey:

[E]ra de regular tamaño, de hombros anchos, de tórax militar, brazos de bíceps abultados, de cuello corto, cabeza redonda y frente ligeramente aplastada, su cabello negro y grueso, tenía un brillo intenso de cosméticos, su boca, de labios sensuales y su nariz un poco ancha aunque bastante recta, mostraba la energía de su carácter. Pero en donde brillaba todo el recio batallar de su sangre india, era en sus ojos, negros y profundos.

(Mateizán qtd. in Rodríguez Expósito 71)¹⁶¹

While no physical description of Hatuey does exist in colonial chronicles, it can be speculated that this one was modeled after a Taíno phenotype. Rodríguez Expósito mentions briefly other well-known Taíno leaders, such as Bohechío, Caonabó, and Anacaona,¹⁶² before imagining Hatuey’s inner struggle as the Spaniards attacked his people. What remains crucial is the description’s inclusion of Hatuey’s novel characteristics. Hatuey is a peaceful leader forced into violence by aggressive *conquistadors*, for in a battle between Hatuey and Rodrigo Mexia de Trillo,¹⁶³ the *cacique* pronounces his abjection:

¹⁶¹ Rodríguez Expósito cites the description from Roberto Mateizán’s *Cuba pintoresca y sentimental* (1920-31).

¹⁶² He describes Anacaona’s murder and its lasting repercussions on Spain’s reputation in the Antilles and, interestingly, he claims that Caonabó was the first “liberator of America”: “Anacaona, mujer de Caonabó, el primer libertador de América, como muy bien lo califica el escritor dominicano Jaun Bosh, fu[e] condenada a morir por el Gobernador Ovando y ejecutada por sus hombres, entre los cuales figuraba como uno de sus capitanes Diego Velázquez...Ovando aspiraba a inutilizar a la peligrosa Anacaona y sus partidarios; hízolo de una manera que ha deshonrado o debido deshonrar para siempre en el Nuevo Mundo el nombre de los cristianos españoles” (157).

¹⁶³ Rodríguez Expósito admits that historians only speculate that Hatuey fought against Mexia de Trillo. They believe this is what prompted the *cacique* to flee Haiti and avoid being hanged publicly: “Pocos los datos que ofrecen los historiadores sobre esta rebelión india. Tampoco se señala la actuación del Cacique Hatuey, Jefe de esta comarca como el iniciador y cabecilla de la misma, pero estimamos como el doctor Rafael Azcárate y Rosell, en su ‘Historia de los Indios de Cuba’, donde nos dice: ‘Sería lo más probable

Sois hombres crueles... Sois hombres malos que tratáis de esclavizar a los hijos de esta tierra. Habéis venido con propósitos malvados contra una población que vive en plena paz. Idos de aquí... No permitiré que os llev[éis] a ninguno de los de mi raza, a ninguno de los de mi grey... Primero muerto que ceder... Primero muerto que esclavo... Decidle a tu amo y señor que aquí manda el cacique Hatuey. (77)

Chapters Four, Five, and Six,¹⁶⁴ in turn, parallel Hatuey's and Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar's struggles as they each face each other in battle. Accordingly, and despite his better efforts, Hatuey cannot gain sufficient support from the Cuban Taínos and is forced to attack the Spaniards using guerrilla warfare, which devastated Velázquez de Cuéllar's army. The final two chapters recount Hatuey's capture and death. In what can only be explained as an influence of Sellén's earlier version, a Taíno traitor leads Velázquez de Cuéllar to Hatuey. In Rodríguez Expósito's version, the traitor is an unnamed Taíno who had fought with Hatuey over a woman in Guahába, their former territory (ironically, the traitor is killed later by a Spanish arrow as he flees to the mountains¹⁶⁵). As in Sellén's version, this addition constitutes likely a critique of the myth, though it does not explain sufficiently *how* Hatuey could have fallen. While Las Casas is absent from this version, an unnamed Catholic priest does ask Hatuey if he will convert to Christianity before he

que Hatuey, que era hombre valeroso, luchara contra Rodrigo Mexia y que, vencido por éste, no quisiera ser preso y ahorcado, como lo fu[e] su colega de Hanyguayaba, o por lo menos desearía evitar la esclavitud para él y su gente, y resolvió buscar refugio en la tierra de Cuba, donde aún no habían puesto el pie los españoles con ánimo de una conquista permanente" (157-8).

¹⁶⁴ Titled "Albores de la libertad de Cuba," "La primera batalla por la Independencia de Cuba," and "La guerra de guerrillas," respectively.

¹⁶⁵ "El indio delator también se internó en el monte... De pronto se encuentra con un grupo de indios que huían. En ese instante surge una partida de soldados de Velázquez que con furia perseguían a aquel grupo de indios disparando sus arcabuces. El fuego se acentúa acercándose hacia el lugar donde se hallaba el indio traidor, quien al sentir cerca a los soldados, trata de huir, a esconderse en el monte, pero es alcanzado por una lanza de un soldado español que le atraviesa el pecho... ¡Qué inocente estaba aquel soldado que su lanza castellana había vengado al cacique Hatuey...!" (118-9).

dies, to which he replies his famous last words: “Si los cristianos van al cielo no quiero ir al cielo, Padre, donde están los cristianos que matan y hacen esclavos a los indios...” (132).

While Rodríguez Expósito’s version does recognize Hatuey’s importance for Cuba’s symbolic heritage, its underlying intention is broader and to remind Cubans of the nation’s Independence struggle. Thus, the author connects throughout the text the Spanish Conquest and Spain’s tumultuous relationship with 19th-century Cuba. From the prologue, where Rodríguez Expósito equates Hatuey to Dominican rebel separatist Máximo Gómez (1836-1905),¹⁶⁶ to the final moments of Hatuey’s life, the Taíno *cacique* constantly reminds the 36-year battle for Cuban Independence. And as in Sellén’s version, Rodríguez Expósito’s focuses upon Hatuey’s symbolism, as opposed to a historical retelling. As the text explains: “Los indios se aprestan a la reconquista de sus tierras y de sus libertades. A este momento victorioso al través de los siglos los historiadores llamaron Independencia. Independencia o Reconquista d[a] igual. Lo que vale es el gesto, y Hatuey es el primer caudillo que se apresta a organizar la lucha en Cuba” (84). But perhaps most importantly, *Hatuey* reminded Cubans of their shared heritage in an era of national unity.

The Haitian-American Diaspora: Edwidge Danticat’s *Anacaona: Golden Flower*, Haiti, 1490 (2005)

While the present analysis has focused primarily upon 19th- and 20th-century Dominican and Cuban versions of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, the last few decades of the 20th and 21st centuries have produced versions that have turned these national

¹⁶⁶ “...Hatuey, el indio bravo nacido en Guahába, isla de Haití o Quisqueya, indiscutiblemente, el primer libertador de Cuba, cuyas hazañas y glorias más tarde repitiera otro hijo de esa propia isla—Máximo Gómez, cuya actuación guerrera e idealista culminara con la libertad e independencia de Cuba...” (25).

symbols into pan-Caribbean—and perhaps even transatlantic—myths. Particularly evident has been Anacaona, immortalized in Haitian playwright Jean Métellus' (1937-2014) play of the same name (1986) and establishing it as a national myth. In recent years, however, when myth has been revived in young adult novels geared towards the Haitian-American population, Edwidge Danticat's (1969-) *Anacaona: Golden Flower, Haiti, 1490* (2005) has also known success. Danticat, a Haitian-American novelist and short-story author, gained national recognition for her first novel *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1994),¹⁶⁷ which chronicles a young Haitian girl's emigration to New York City. Danticat's corpus, which to date includes 16 books, 3 short stories, and 2 films, focuses primarily upon the Haitian-American experience against the background of important historical Haitian figures. Dominican author Junot Díaz has described Danticat as a "quintessential American writer, tackling the new world's hidden history of apocalypse and how one survives it" (qtd. in Jaggi). Danticat published *Anacaona* one year after the release of *The Dew Breaker* (2004), her fourth novel, which explores the aftermath of the François and Jean-Claude Duvalier dictatorships (1957-71; 1971-86, respectively). A native of Port-au-Prince, Danticat and her family emigrated to New York when she was twelve. Her strong Haitian connection is present in her writings, yet she has also admitted a special connection to Anacaona. She explains her attraction to the *cacica*'s story at a young age in the novel's "About the Author" section: as "a woman who was not only a warrior, poet, and storyteller but also one of our first diplomats" (179). In a 2003 interview with Bonnie Lyons, Danticat revealed that her own mother also happened to be from Léogâne, the same region where Anacaona had reigned (198). As Danticat states further in her novel: "Thus in some very primal way, Anacaona has always been in my

¹⁶⁷ *New York Times Magazine* named Danticat one of the "30 Under 30" people to watch that same year.

blood and I remain, in the deepest part of my soul, one of her most faithful subjects” (181).

Anacaona, structured like a 151-entry diary, forms part of the young adult *The Royal Diaries* series, a 20-book set published by Scholastic Press that reimagines the life of various historical women during young adulthood.¹⁶⁸ Much like Ureña’s version, Danticat imagines Anacaona’s internal world and her first-hand account of the Conquest. It is divided into three sections, and is subdivided into seasons. As Danticat explains: “To present the story of this brilliant Taíno woman leader in her early adulthood, we have imagined her thoughts and experiences and how she might have kept track of them using a twenty-day lunar cycle” (3). The first section takes place in Xaraguá and includes the following seasons: “Tobacco Harvest,” “Guava Planting,” “Yucca Harvest,” “Corn Harvest/Rainy Season,” and “The Sunny Season.” Given the novel’s didactic nature, this section provides ample information about Taíno life and culture, including religious practices, family relations, alimentary diets, agricultural practices, and important ceremonial practices, such as the *areítos*. It also follows Anacaona’s journey into adulthood, which culminates in the “hair-cutting ceremony” rite-of-passage. This section also introduces Caonabó, the famous *cacique* with whom Anacaona becomes smitten. Keeping her audience in mind, Danticat develops Anacaona’s internal life as she falls in love with the *cacique* and awaits his marriage proposal in the final diary entry.

The next section, in three seasons (“My First Maguana Season,” “Season of the Peanut Harvest,” and “My Higuamota¹⁶⁹ Season”) takes place in Maguana during 1491. Shorter in length, its themes focus upon her new life as wife and expectant mother.

¹⁶⁸ Including *Elizabeth I* (1999), *Isabel* (2000), and *Mary, Queen of Scots* (2002), among others.

¹⁶⁹ Danticat uses yet another variation of the daughter’s name; it is “Higuemota” in Las Casas’ version and “Higuenamota” in Ureña’s.

Although Anacaona is in a different territory, she maintains contact with her brother and family in Xaraguá, and the section closes with her uncle's death, Anacaona's pregnancy, and Higuamota's birth. The final section, with only two seasons ("The Windy Season" and "Our Season of War"), takes place in Maguana during 1492. With an increasingly serious tone, Danicat offers an intriguing Taíno view of the arrival of the Spaniards:

We were awakened at dawn by clamorous voices like none I have ever heard and the sight of men unlike any I have ever seen. They were tall, nearly twice our size. Their heads were as round as the full moon and what we could see of their skin—for they were covered in dark, heavy-looking materials from their shoulders down to their hide-clothed feet—was indeed pale, though not as pale as I had imagined. Their hands and faces were slightly pink, as if only recently singed by the sun. Though they were in smaller numbers than us—I counted only four—they seemed to be in charge of our subchiefs, servants, and warriors, who had followed them from several villages inland and had fearfully led them to us. (127-8)

Caonabó and Anacaona kill the four Spaniards after one of them shoots a gun that nearly kills Higuamota, an incident that begins "Our Season of War" by recounting the Spaniards' lust for gold and cruelty towards the Taínos. In the novel's final scene, Anacaona, Caonabó, and Higuamota all sit in the plaza after a large feast with Manicaotex, a neighboring *cacique*. Anacaona tells of her wedding day and her arrival to Maguana, legends integral to Taíno culture, and explains the need to tell these stories so that future generations will know that the Taínos' battle with the Spaniards did not define

them.¹⁷⁰ Anacaona closes her diary with an important message to future Haitians: “Yes, I want our victory over the pale men to be a tale that will inspire us when we have other battles to fight, one that reminds us that, like the Kalinas, we are a strong and powerful people...But I do not want it to become the only story we ever have to share with one another. It cannot be. It must not be” (155-6).

While Danticat’s literary corpus has been the subject of numerous studies, no critical analyses have focused upon *Anacaona*, perhaps because it was written for adolescent readers. Indeed, the novel succeeds in educating younger audiences about Taíno culture in general and this figure in particular. It does not describe Anacaona’s death, but the “Epilogue” does tell of the remaining events, including *La Navidad*’s destruction, Caonabó’s death, and the *cacica*’s lynching. An additional “Historical Note” contains further information about the Taínos, complete with Anacaona’s lineage chart and descriptions, several images taken from colonial chronicles, and a Taíno dictionary, thus further increasing the text’s didactic purpose. Nevertheless, Anacaona’s final words do reveal a deeper intention; Danticat intended for the *cacica*’s story to influence audiences, particularly Haitians and Haitian-Americans, in taking pride in their cultural heritage and use it as a source of strength. This is a distinct departure from Las Casas’ and Ureña’s versions, which do not focus explicitly upon celebrating Taíno culture. Indeed, Danticat goes into detailed descriptions of Taíno rituals, customs, beliefs, foods, among others. This version, therefore, becomes a cultural presentation of the *cacica*’s legend, as opposed to strictly historical. The focus upon culture was, perhaps, due to the novel’s intended younger audience and its didactic emphasis. And yet, Danticat’s novel

¹⁷⁰ “I did not want our battle with the pale men to become the only story our people would ever recite from now on. For we had other stories, too, happy as well as sad ones. Our encounter with the pale men was only a small piece of that story. Surely an important piece, but not the most important” (155).

proved that although Anacaona may have died some 500 years prior, her story remains relevant to contemporary audiences. This renders further true for Haitian psychologist Maryse Noël Roumain's own shorter (36-page) adaptation, a young adult bilingual novella *Anacaona, Ayiti's Taino Queen/Anacaona, La Reine Taino D'Ayiti* (2012), that also gives an overview of the *cacica*'s life and Taíno culture. Different from Danicat's work, this version, though brief, reaches French-speaking Haitians as well as Haitian-Americans, thus facilitating interest in Haiti's cultural heritage and disseminating the Anacaona myth onto a larger audience.

Postcolonial Hatuey: Icíar Bollain's *También la lluvia* (2010)

Not until almost sixty years after Rodríguez Expósito's historical account was the Hatuey myth rewritten. Spanish director Icíar Bollain's *También la lluvia* (2010), her fifth feature-length film, depicts the Hatuey myth and its connection to the Cochabamba Water Wars that occurred during 1999 and 2000 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The film received positive reviews and was Spain's entry for "Best Foreign Film" at the 83rd U.S. Academy Awards.¹⁷¹ It did not win an Oscar, but did earn several prestigious international film awards, including the Goya (Spain) and Ariel (Mexico) awards, a feat that mimicked symbolically the actual film, which bridges the gap between "New" and "Old" Worlds.

While a film cannot be judged solely upon its awards, the fact that *También la lluvia* won such acclaim may result from the impact it had upon critics and audiences. The film centers around a Spanish film crew in Bolivia shooting a biopic that depicts the first encounter between Cristóbal Colón and the Taíno Indians in Hispaniola. The Spanish crew and Mexican director Sebastián choose Bolivia as their site because of the limited

¹⁷¹ It beat out Daniel Monzón's critically acclaimed *Celda 211* (2009).

budget of Anglo investors. While filming, the Cochabamba Water Wars (1999-2000)—real-life indigenous manifestations against the privatization of water by foreign agents—erupt and the film crew is thrown amidst violent indigenous protests. Daniel, who plays Hatuey in the biopic, leads the protests, which threaten both the film's production and the corrupt Mayor's privatization project. The police detain Daniel, but Costa, the film's producer, bribes the Chief of Police into releasing him long enough to film the final scenes. As tensions rise, the crew becomes increasingly wary and decide ultimately to leave the country and production is halted. When Daniel's daughter is seriously injured during a protest, Costa risks his life to retrieve her and take her to a hospital. In the final scene, Costa apologizes to Daniel for betraying him and the two part ways. Despite this reconciliation, Daniel's final remarks indicate that the indigenous struggle is far from over: "Costa: ¿Qué vas a hacer?/ Daniel: Sobrevivir. Como siempre. Es lo que hacemos mejor" (01:31:43-52).

The Hatuey myth is the thread that connects temporal and geographical spaces throughout the film. Indeed, all characters seemingly embody the historical figures they portray in the colonial biopic. As temporal spaces—past and present—merge, so do geographical ones—Hispaniola and Bolivia. This convergence highlights the film's postcolonial rhetoric: the Cochabamba Water Wars at the end of the 20th century were the result of colonial structures perpetuating powers over marginalized indigenous populations. Such protests did begin in December 1999 in Cochabamba after public officials agreed to privatize Semapa, the city's water supply company, hiked water prices (up to 300%), and affected independently-built communal wells. By April 2000 the Cochabamba government had annulled privatization efforts, a move that was viewed as a

great feat by the marginalized indigenous population. In order to make a more explicit connection between colonial exploitation in Cochabamba, Director Bollaín employed the technique of *mise-en-abyme*, a self-conscious “film within a film” effect that created three narrative levels: 1) the actual film *También la lluvia*, 2) the fictitious biopic, and 3) a second “behind-the-scenes” documentary that is shot by crew member María. As a result of this triple layering, temporal and geographical spaces seemingly overlap and the actors, as in Luigi Pirandello’s *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1920), begin to embody the characters they play. Most evident, perhaps, is a scene where the crew has a heated argument over Las Casas. In an almost spectral manner, Antón, who plays Colón in the biopic, and Alberto, playing Las Casas, are possessed by the characters they portray (00:19:56-21:46). Antón questions Las Casas’ “propaganda” and Alberto defends the friar vehemently, until Juan, who plays Fr. Antón de Montesinos, claims jokingly that the film should really be about him. Antón then reminds everyone that winners are the ones who write history: “Es como el fútbol. La historia siempre es cruel con los perdedores” (00:20:46-49). To complement this, the scene ends as Antón, now possessed by Colón, explains why he is in Bolivia: “Por el oro y por Jesucristo” (00:21:36).¹⁷²

While *mise-en-abyme* develops each character’s self-awareness and their views on the Spanish Conquest, the film’s editing facilitates further the connection between past and present. A scene in present-day Bolivia typically is followed by a scene from the Conquest with a similar theme. María, for example, visits Daniel in his community to inquire about the water privatization; he explains that the city is cutting off their water supply for economic gain. The scene ends with a physical fight between a few indigenous

¹⁷² Such self-aware moments are juxtaposed to the third “behind-the-scenes” level, which offers a greater objective view of the characters and exposes them. Another interpretation of this scene is that Paul Laverty wanted to create a “teaching moment” common to his films (see *Carla’s Song* [1996], for example).

men and the police and is immediately followed by Montesinos' famous cry for justice, thus connecting the present and past indigenous exploitation of the Amerindians (00:21:57-26:38). In the real-life Cochabamba Water Wars, *Aguas del Tunari*, a foreign consortium, was negotiating with Semapa, a state agency, to take over the water system. Reacting to this privatization, the film's editing, switching between past and present, further highlights similarities between the Spanish Conquest and the Water Wars: foreign agents enter, attain the "New World," and employ unjust violence and power that threaten indigenous lives. Furthermore, in both instances the indigenous population is marginalized, thus suggesting that some 500 years after the Conquest, the Amerindian still occupies a subaltern space.

The Hatuey myth's logical thread thus connects both temporal and geographical spaces as Daniel and the Taíno *cacique* become increasingly intertwined. All throughout the film, much like Antón, Alberto, and Juan, Daniel is possessed by Hatuey's spirit. Indeed, Hatuey's story and Daniel's experience in the Water Wars blend in order to create a spectral version of the myth. Hatuey is no longer confined to the colonial past; rather, he lives and breathes in contemporary Bolivia through Daniel. As such, the film adapts the Hatuey myth to a contemporary setting by combining scenes from the biopic and from Daniel's life: Colón and his men demand gold from the Taínos, all the while both the film crew along with Cochabamba politicians assume roles as modern-day *conquistadors*, exploiting the indigenous population for economic gain; Hatuey rallies together his fellow Taínos to combat Spanish exploitation as Daniel leads his indigenous community to stand up to corrupt politicians; finally, Daniel is detained by the police just as Hatuey is burned at the stake for his insurgency. The temporal overlap is a common

thread in each version of the Hatuey myth. As Sellén and Rodríguez Expósito made an explicit connection between Hatuey and Cuban patriots, so, too, Bollaín makes it clear that Daniel succeeds where Hatuey failed. And yet, the geographical overlap distinguishes this version from previous ones and leads to two critical questions: 1) why is Hatuey displaced to Bolivia, and 2) can the myth function in a different geographical space? Screenwriter Laverty must have anticipated such questions as he addresses them at the beginning of the film. In one poignant scene, for example, María films Costa and Sebastián while they are driving in the mountains. As soon as Sebastián argues that using Quechua indians to represent Taínos does not make much sense, Costa spouts, “¡Ah! Todos son iguales.” María then cuts to Sebastián who instructs her to turn off the video. Costa later explains that their decision to film in Bolivia is strictly a question of saving money: they have a tight budget because they have chosen to film in Spanish. María, however, addresses the critical questions above: “Entonces los españoles hablan español, ¿y los taínos que encontró Colón hablan quechua?” (00:05:40-07:20). Because the geographical displacement of the Hatuey myth is never fully resolved, this question opens up the film to a valid critique of the myth’s effectiveness as applied to the Cochabamba Water Wars. After all, Hatuey is a Pan-Caribbean symbol with no ties to Quechua indians. And yet, the film highlights two specific episodes of indigenous exploitation in distinct times and locations precisely in order to draw attention to a shared Latin-American heritage. The Hatuey myth is one example of the exploitation felt by all colonial Amerindians, and the Cochabamba Water Wars are but one episode of indigenous protests throughout the continent. In this sense, this particular version of the Hatuey myth introduces a huge variant by stating explicitly that not only did Hatuey (and

Anacaona for that matter) fail, but the indigenous population throughout the continent continues to be exploited with impunity. Where Nápoles Fajardo, Ureña, Sellén, Rodríguez Expósito, and Danticat may have hinted that the battle against corrupt powers goes on, Bollaín states it directly. And, while this particular version projects the Hatuey myth internationally, it suggests also that the Taíno struggle was but one among many of indigenous populations, and it contains the same hopeful symbol against indigenous injustice.

The Anacaona and Hatuey Myths

The prevalence of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths from colonial chronicles to recent literature and film, leads one to wonder why these figures, as opposed to other Taíno *caciques*, drew such focus. Despite disappearing over 500 years ago, Anacaona and Hatuey continue to fascinate (inter)national audiences. Their symbol represents a rebellious cultural past that fuels nationalist campaigns and anti- and postcolonial ideologies. While the versions differ, examining them together, as we did in the case of the Doña Bárbara myth, becomes useful to uncover their universal core.

Before tackling an interpretation of these myths, it is helpful to identify the structure—or mythemes—of each. To begin, the Anacaona myth can be broken down into the following seven mythemes: 1) Anacaona leads a peaceful, happy existence in Xaraguá, 2) Anacaona marries Caonabó and moves to Maguana, 3) Spaniards arrive and Guacanagarix becomes their ally, 4) Caonabó's destroys *La Navidad*, is captured, dies in a shipwreck, 5) Anacaona returns to Xaraguá and becomes *cacica* when Bohechío dies, 6) Anacaona maintains a peaceful stance towards the *conquistadors*, and 7) Nicolás de Ovando attacks the Xaraguá people, captures Anacaona, who is hanged publicly. In turn,

the Hatuey myth can be broken down into the following six mythemes: 1) Hatuey flees Quisqueya after the arrival of the Spaniards, 2) he warns the Cuban Taínos that Spaniards are in search of gold, their true god, 3) Hatuey convinces the Taínos to get rid of their gold, 4) Taínos and Spaniards battle in Cuba until Hatuey is captured, sentenced to death, 5) a priest asks Hatuey to convert or else go to Hell, and Hatuey responds that he prefers Hell.

Further examination of these two myth structures reveals similarities. At each outset, Taínos live an Eden-like existence until the Spaniards' arrival in 1492, when a conflict between the good Amerindians and evil *conquistadors* emerges. Both Anacaona and Hatuey attempt to protect the Taíno population. The former delegates peacefully to prevent violent Spanish attacks on her people, while the latter flees to Cuba in order to warn those Taínos of an imminent Spanish attack. In both, the Spaniards conduct a mass genocide whereby *caciques* are murdered for refusing to aid Spaniards in their quest for gold. Thus both figures are sacrificed: Ovando hangs Anacaona and Velázquez de Cuéllar has Hatuey burned at the stake. The Spaniards justify their deaths as a necessary means to insert dominance in the region. By sacrificing the *caciques*, Taíno insurgency would waver. And yet, later versions of the myths have both Anacaona's and Hatuey's sacrifice as heroic. Their common symbol serves those who fight the common power structures, often for nationalist purposes, centuries later.

Apart from these mythemes, however, several sub-mythemes surface that lead to a deeper understanding of the myths' core connotations. At heart are the binary oppositions of civilization and barbarity in the form of several dichotomies: good/evil; hero/villain; native/foreigner; Heaven/Hell; among others. This binary opposition is in

fact the core of the two myths. And yet, barbarity is relativized in both. That is, both narratives underscore the “civilized” behavior of the two *caciques* and the “barbarity” of the Europeans, thus pondering the question: who is the actual barbarian? By further breaking down that core, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths reveal two sub-mythemes: 1) the myth of the martyr based on the notion of the sacrificial child, specifically, Jesus Christ; and 2) a myth of rebellion rooted in the colonial construction of the “noble savage.”

Myth of the Martyr: Scapegoating and the Sacrificial Child

Upon analyzing the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, one cannot deny their overtly religious overtones, a likely influence of Las Casas’ original version upon subsequent ones. While Las Casas’ chronicles were hardly the sole colonial document to mention Anacaona and Hatuey, they were the most popular. Thus, it can be assumed (although at times it is certainly explicit) that the authors and director in our reading used Las Casas’ chronicles to reconstruct their own versions. Although Las Casas used these *caciques* to draw the Spanish Crown’s attention to corruption in the New World, he was also a Dominican friar intent on spreading the Christian faith and naturally, his chronicle is filled with piety and sentiment. In 1492, the same year that Colón sailed for the Indies, Spain defeated the Moors in Granada in *La Reconquista* (Re-Conquest). This Conquest/Re-Conquest, coupled with the discovery of new territories, filled with non-Christians, infused the Spanish Conquest with a religious cause. The Catholic Monarchs, like all European royalty, viewed the world in terms of Christian and Non-Christian spaces. Their divine mission was to conquer and convert the latter in preparation for Christ’s second coming. Thus for the Catholic Kings, discovering the New World had an

eschatological meaning. Spain had been chosen by God to “civilize” Amerindians, in the same way that God had facilitated the expulsion of Jews and Muslims.

Europeans viewed the New World as a mythical virgin territory, a terrestrial paradise that mirrored Biblical images of the Garden of Eden, filled with plentiful foods, water, peaceful naked beings. Colón even argued, in fact, that biblical geographic references to the Garden of Eden placed it precisely in the New World. The Book of Genesis (3:23-4) claims that, after the fall of man, “the Lord God banished [man] from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.” As Washington Irving noted of Colón’s diaries:

“[Colón] imagined this apex to be situated about the equinoctial line, in the interior of this vast continent, which he considered the extremity of the east; that on this summit, as it were, of the earth, was situated the terrestrial paradise; and that the vast stream of fresh water, which poured into the Gulf of Paria, issued from the fountain of the tree of life, in the midst of the garden of Eden” (qtd. in Beck 130).

Before the so-called Discovery, the Garden of Eden, it was believed, was located in Africa, at the convergence of the Nile’s headwaters. Soon after Colón reached Hispaniola, however, that geographical location was transferred imaginatively from Africa to South America: the Amazon River replaced the Nile. Las Casas also seemed to believe that Colón had stumbled across the biblical Eden, as Colón recounted in his *Cuatro viajes*: “...according to the church fathers and the wisest philosophers, the

terrestrial paradise is located at the end of the Orient, because it has a warm climate. So, these lands that he had discovered are...the end of the Orient” (qtd. in Beck 133). Las Casas believed the New World was a terrestrial paradise, even referring to it as the Spanish Promised Land.¹⁷³ And yet, Las Casas also added that the Spaniards’ sinful nature made them unworthy of such a holy place: “[the Spanish] could build great Spanish cities here, and live as in the terrestrial paradise (if they were worthy of it), but they are not [worthy] for their great avarice, and insensibility, and great sins, just as they were not worthy of the other plentiful parts of this land that God has shown them” (qtd. in Beck 26). As chroniclers and *conquistadors* began corresponding with Spain about their discovery, the idea of a terrestrial Eden soon spread across Europe. As Lauren Beck has noted, “At the turn of the fifteenth century, a mentality prevailed in Europe that connected references to men and women shamelessly walking about naked to the behavior of the first man and woman in the biblical paradise, comparing the New World inhabitants to those who lived in the Garden of Eden” (130).

Such a Christian ideal of a terrestrial Eden prevails in all versions of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths. Each version begins with a description of the Taínos’ tranquil and happy life, followed by a premonition of their inevitable destruction, a description, we might note, that almost always emerges from the native point-of-view (the outlier here being Rodríguez Expósito’s novel, which he begins with a brief description of the *Reconquista* before switching to the Quisqueya-Cuban Eden¹⁷⁴). In that sense, Hatuey and Anacaona are new versions of the biblical Adam and Eve and, at the

¹⁷³ The Promised Land refers to Jerusalem, the territory Jews were led to after their expulsion. This can be found in the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament.

¹⁷⁴ Rodríguez Expósito does this to draw a parallel between the two events in order to highlight Spain’s epic quest to Christianize the world.

same time, subversions of the edenic couple: they live harmoniously with nature; they obey their god(s); they wear very little clothing; and, perhaps most importantly, they have not yet eaten from the Tree of Knowledge. In other words, they are innocent beings devoid of any knowledge outside of Eden. The Spanish arrival penetrates and corrupts this mythical world. Exposure to the “outside world”—the bridge connecting them to European corruption—destroys their Eden.¹⁷⁵ With the exception of Bollaín’s film, all versions, then, create and destroy this Eden explicitly. Bollaín’s film, which draws a parallel between the Cochabamba Water Wars and indigenous subjugation during the Conquest, focuses primarily upon present-day Amerindians. In the film’s first scene, she does allude, however, to the Taíno’s innocent and happy existence before the arrival of the Spaniards. The sequence (00:13:33-15:42) begins with a low-angle shot of a wooden cross in a field. The camera then pans down to children crawling playfully towards the group of Taínos and Spaniards. Children watch happily, whispering to each other, all the while Colón explains to adult Taínos that they must pay a gold tariff. The children, however, continue to giggle happily, oblivious to the seriousness of the situation—a signal to the peaceful Taíno life before the Spanish arrival.

In each version, then, the Christian overtone of the Taíno Eden is reinforced by the Christ-like deaths of Anacaona and Hatuey. As detailed in the biblical Gospels, the Romans crucified Jesus Christ for his insurgency and because he claimed to be “King of the Jews.” Christ was a leader who preached against corrupt powers, therefore death was deemed necessary in order for Romans and Jews to maintain hegemonic power in the

¹⁷⁵ Although the Nápoles Fajardo, Ureña, Sellén, Rodríguez Expósito, and Danticat versions mention the Caribs (or Kalinas), the neighboring indigenous group that periodically ransacked Taíno camps, they are never presented as a real threat because they never penetrate fully the Taíno Eden as the Spaniards would later do.

region. Anacaona and Hatuey become Christ-equivalents for the Taíno population, challenging Spanish corruption on the islands and paying for this rebellion with their lives. While the symbolic connection between Christ's crucifixion and the *caciques'* deaths exists in all versions, Bollaín's is arguably the most representative. After the film's initial sequence—a casting call for extras—the camera switches to a low-angle shot of a helicopter flying over the indigenous crowd (and Daniel) carrying a large wooden cross, signaling both Hatuey's inevitable demise and Christ's crucifixion (00:05:02-10).¹⁷⁶ Indeed, the later scene depicting Hatuey's death shows a *conquistador* choosing twelve Taíno men, representing the twelve apostles, to be burnt alongside their *cacique*. After choosing the men, another *conquistador* asks, “Y Ahora, ¿quién hará de Jesucristo?” as Hatuey is dragged along to the stake (01:05:30-51).

Yet another element found in almost every version of the myth that makes this Christ connection more explicit is the traitor, an obvious allusion to Judas' role in Christ's death. In all versions of the Anacaona myth, Guacanagarix, the Marién *cacique* allied with the Spaniards, is the traitor. In Sellén's version, it is Atabaiba, the young Taíno girl who falls in love with a *conquistador*. In Rodríguez Expósito's, it is the young Taíno male who fought with Hatuey over a girl. In Bollaín's, it is Costa, the film's producer who buys Daniel's freedom long enough to finish filming. Each of these traitors is, in fact, the Judas of the Christ myth—acting out of self-interest, they aid the Spaniards in capturing Anacaona and Hatuey. Yet apart from exhibiting Christ-like deaths, the Taíno *caciques* also emulate Christ's defining characteristics: pacifism and a rejection of worldly riches. While Anacaona's strong pacifist stance is more similar to Christ's

¹⁷⁶ This is also, perhaps, a quotation from the opening scene in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), where a statue of the Christ, flying across Rome, is transported by helicopter.

temperament, Hatuey, too, remains a pacifist, but only until Spanish attacks provoke him to defend his people. Furthermore, both *caciques* reject the Spaniards' lust for gold: Anacaona refuses to comply with the gold tariff and force her people to mine for the precious metal; and Hatuey denies the Spaniards' "true god" by instructing the Cuban Taínos to dispense with all of their gold.

Yet another similarity between these myths is that Christ, Anacaona, and Hatuey are all relatively the same age,¹⁷⁷ thus prompting the question: what, if any, is the significance of age in these myths? Human sacrifice is a concept that spans time and geography. Its function in earlier cultures was to appease god(s) which, in turn, ensured a civilization's survival. Furthermore, this offering was typically a younger, viril victim. In the Bible, child sacrifice is used to demonstrate Old Testament obedience to the Judaic god, as exemplified by stories such as Abraham and Isaac.¹⁷⁸ And yet, as the literal "Son of God," Christ in the New Testament is the ultimate example of the sacrificial child. In a seemingly paradoxical manner, God sacrifices his only son, thereby ending his bloodline, in order to offer eternal life to Christians. In the same ironic fashion, Anacaona's and Hatuey's deaths ended the Taíno bloodline, yet also demonstrate a sense of preservation. As Christ's crucifixion provided a path to eternal life, the *caciques'* sacrifice ensured that future generations would survive: Las Casas' version provided a path for future Amerindians as the Spanish Crown was forced to address indigenous exploitation in the New World; Nápoles Fajardo's provided a path of unity for those Cubans who were exiled under Spanish rule; Ureña's and Sellén's versions dramatized the path of

¹⁷⁷ It is believed that Christ was in his 30s, Anacaona was around 30 years old, and Hatuey was either in his 20s or 30s.

¹⁷⁸ The most famous sacrifice occurs in the Book of Genesis, when God instructs Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac as a sign of obedience. Ultimately, God stops Abraham moments before he is about to sacrifice his son (22:2-8).

independence for 19th-century Dominicans and Cubans; Rodríguez Expósito's version provided one of cultural unity for Cuban nationalism under a new constitution; Danticat's version provides another for Haitian cultural heritage to survive among diasporic communities; finally, Bollaín's provides a path for contemporary indigenous populations to combat hegemonic powers that threaten their existence. All of this explains, perhaps, why all versions of the myths allude to Destiny.

Like Christ, Anacaona and Hatuey sacrificed their lives, the very definition of martyrdom, for the good of future generations. René Girard's theory of mimetic desire is useful when analyzing this aspect of the myth. According to this theory, a conflict (usually violent) is often resolved by placing blame on a third party, or what Girard calls the "scapegoat." By diverting tensions towards the scapegoat, this entity (singular or collective) takes the blame for the conflict. As such, the scapegoat's demise appeases those involved in the conflict and tensions are resolved. To explore the function of this theory in the myth of the martyr, we begin with Anacaona. The *conquistadors* believed that Hispaniola contained gold, their primary desire, and Anacaona's resistance to the gold tariff impeded this desire, thereby creating a conflict. At the same time, Guacanagarix, the Marién *cacique*, was allied with the Spaniards. As we see in Las Casas' chronicles, and Ureña's and Danticat's versions, Guacanagarix often complained to the *conquistadors* about the violence the other Taíno *caciques* inflicted upon his people, who were perceived as traitors. These attacks threatened this alliance, thereby creating a second conflict. As tensions grew on the island, the Spaniards realize that the only way to obtain their goal was to exterminate Anacaona. By the same token, Guacanagarix would also benefit from her death, as other Taínos would stop attacking the

Marién people. Thus, both Spaniards and Guacanagarix viewed Anacaona as a scapegoat—the culprit for their respective conflicts. Her extermination would end both conflicts and aid each group in obtaining their goal: the Spaniards would gain control over the Taíno population and continue their search for gold; and Guacanagarix’s people would be left in peace. In the Hatuey myth, the scapegoat functions identically. The Spaniards’ pursuit of gold is also inhibited by Hatuey, creating a conflict. While Las Casas’ version does not name a traitor that would benefit from Hatuey’s death,¹⁷⁹ Sellén’s version has Atabaiba and Rodríguez Expósito’s has the young Taíno male, both in conflict because of the *cacique*: Hatuey inhibits Atabaiba’s desire to be with a *conquistador*; and he inhibits the Taíno male’s desire to be with a Taíno woman on Quisqueya. As in Anacaona’s case, the Spaniards and Hatuey’s traitors convert him into a scapegoat whose death would end their respective conflicts.

Because of the various spatial elements involved, we must separate Bollaín’s version of the Hatuey myth from the rest when focusing upon the scapegoat. Her film is not a mere recapitulation of Hatuey’s myth; rather, the Taíno *cacique*’s and Daniel’s lives overlap, converging eventually into a single one. With this in mind, the scapegoat is actually Daniel—the reincarnated Hatuey. As such, the two parties in conflict with the Amerindians that would benefit from Daniel’s demise are Costa, the film’s producer, and the Cochabamba government.

To begin with, Costa cannot finish the biopic without the indigenous extras; and yet, on several occasions, they fail to cooperate. For instance, while filming a scene in

¹⁷⁹ Las Casas offers the following information on Hatuey’s capture: “...por mandado de Diego Velazquez, anduvieron muchos días en esta demanda, y a cuantos indios tomaban a vida interrogaban con amenazas y tormentos, que dijese del cacique Hatuey dónde estaba; dellos, decían que no sabían; dellos, sufriendo los tormentos, negaban; dellos, finalmente, descubrieron por dónde andaba, y al cabo lo hallaron” (*Historia* Libro III, 100).

which indigenous women drown their babies, Daniel tells the film crew that the women will not film the scene because it is something they could never imagine happening (00:42:37-45:37). Daniel's impedes Costa's desire to finish the film, thus creating an initial conflict. Throughout the film, tensions between the two build as Daniel's involvement in demonstrations threatens the biopic's production. The Cochabamba government is also in conflict with the indigenous population, who impedes their desire to privatize the water system. The similarities between Costa's and the government's desires is evident in one particular scene where the film crew visits the municipal palace. When Sebastián, the film director, criticizes the government for allowing a 300% spike in water prices that, subsequently, would create a burden on the Amerindian's two-dollar-a-day salary, the mayor responds, "Es curioso, eso es lo que me han dicho a mí que ustedes les pagan a los extras." Sebastián, the film's director, explains that they have a very tight budget, to which the mayor replies: "Eso es lo que nos pasa a todos" (00:50:40-51:07). Therefore, both parties find themselves in similar conflicts. As the scapegoat, Daniel's demise, which consisted in him stepping down as demonstration leader, would resolve both Costa's and the Cochabamba government's conflicts.

One important aspect of scapegoats is that in order to maintain their status, they must continue to be perceived as an imminent threat. As evidenced in the different versions of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, these two figures do not continue to be viewed as scapegoats after their deaths. In fact, much as in the Christ myth, the followers of the *caciques* had the power to diminish their scapegoat status in order to exalt them as martyrs. As such, the victimhood and selflessness that characterized Anacaona's and Hatuey's deaths in each version in actuality redirected the threat towards a different

party, thus breaking down the *caciques*' status as scapegoat. By presenting Anacaona and Hatuey as martyrs, their myths embody an ironic interpretation of the original scapegoat: Spain (or the Cochabamba government), one of the original parties who benefitted from the scapegoat, is ousted from this position and in turn converted into the new scapegoat. As such, hegemonic powers that denoted Anacaona and Hatuey as scapegoats lost this positioning: what they presumed would resolve their problems—by eliminating the scapegoat—ended up multiplying them by turning these figures into myths of martyrdom. With further examination, we see that this reversal functions as well in relation to their being “noble savages.”

Myth of Rebellion and the “Noble Savage”

Given that Anacaona's and Hatuey's rebellions were used recurrently on behalf of political interests that possibly did not have a direct influence upon the remaining Taíno population, the question remains: why was the Amerindian, as opposed to other marginal groups (the African slave, for example), used to create Pan-Caribbean cultural myth? The short answer: because Anacaona and Hatuey are myths of rebellion. But this answer is hardly satisfying. Why would an extinct rebellious Taíno *cacique* have the ability to unite *criollos*, *mulatos*, *mestizos*, or *africanos*? Surely there were *criollo* or African rebels—or in the Andean case, Quechua indians, such as Atahualpa or Tupac Amaru—that displayed equal courage against adversaries? The answer, perhaps, lies in the historically Eurocentric construction of the “noble savage” that has persisted since the colonial era, a stereotype that continues to define the indigenous subaltern by metropolitan standards.

Anacaona and Hatuey are both put to death for their insurgencies. Because their rebellion against Spanish gold tariffs threatened colonial power, the two rebels had to be

publicly exterminated as examples to the Taíno population. Indeed, rebellion and public punishment are two of the core sub-mythemes of both myths, thus explaining why Hatuey is commonly referred to as “*El primer rebelde de Cuba*.”¹⁸⁰ Anacaona’s epithet “*Flor de Oro*” barely deters from the fact that she, too, is viewed as an important rebel in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Anacaona and Hatuey’s physical displacement among regions and islands—Anacaona travelled from present-day Haiti to present-day Dominican Republic, and Hatuey from Quisqueya to Cuba—provides Pan-Caribbean nations with a common kinship. Thus, while their symbol has often been nationalist—such as in Nápoles Fajardo’s, Ureña’s, Sellén’s, and Rodríguez Expósito’s versions—more recent adaptations indicate that their myths are, in fact, hemispherically international—witness in Danticat’s 2005 novel and Bollaín’s 2010 film. One common element that aids the Anacaona and Hatuey myths’ geographical fluidity is Latin America’s shared, colonial heritage. Indeed, as Bollaín’s film indicates, indigenous exploitation was not unique to the Taínos; rather, since the colonial period all indigenous populations in Latin America have been victims of ongoing exploitation. The ability to draw a parallel between Taíno suffering and contemporary issues, albeit Independence from Spain, or the Cochabamba Water Wars, indicates that Anacaona and Hatuey are universal symbols of rebellion. Their myths portray the brave resistance to power, often to foreign forces, that has plagued Latin America since the Conquest. Employing a psychoanalytical approach to these myths, Anacaona’s and Hatuey’s stories had a mimetic function on their audience(s). As Cubans, Dominicans, and Haitians (or in Bollaín’s case, Bolivians) confronted power structures that threatened their natural freedoms, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths act as reminders of the wages of such power

¹⁸⁰ There are numerous monuments of Hatuey scattered throughout the island with this title.

and the unjust sacrifices that plagued Latin America's past. Furthermore, they constitute a reminder that the corruption which they comment upon recurs as a cycle in their respective countries—or continent—and must be broken by succeeding where Anacaona and Hatuey failed.

Anacaona and Hatuey possess a unifying quality that exposes the conflict embedded in these myths. While the *caciques* exuded a rebellious spirit, they also represented the wages of undisciplined rebellion: they failed. Their myths, therefore, provide examples that are both positive and negative: their rebellion against corrupt power must be emulated; and yet, future generations must succeed where they did not. This explains, perhaps, why a number of versions invoke their images for nationalist campaigns that relied upon political and cultural unity: Nápoles Fajardo's, Ureña's, and Sellén's *indianista* texts invoked a Romantic version of the Amerindian during independence and nation-building projects; Rodríguez Expósito's own version was motivated by Fulgencio Batista's nationalist campaign. Here, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths aspired to being a way to unite Dominicans and Cubans, respectively, in a common cultural heritage that was unique to the nation. More importantly, as shown in Nápoles Fajardo's, Ureña's, and Sellén's versions, it was a shared heritage that separated them (culturally) from Spain. Important to mention, however, is that these campaigns did not focus upon uniting Amerindians. Rather, Anacaona's and Hatuey's rebellious nature was exploited by ruling Creole projects in order to promote their own interests.¹⁸¹ Even in Bollaín's film—arguably the only version that addresses contemporary Amerindian exploitation—the Hatuey myth remains an outsider construct, as Director Bollaín and

¹⁸¹ For this reason, scholars have made a point to differentiate between *indianista* and *indigenista* texts, the latter promoting structural changes that would benefit the indigenous population.

Screenwriter Laverty are both European. To date, no authentic indigenous versions of the Taíno *caciques* exist, due perhaps to the mass genocide of the Taíno population after the *caciques'* deaths, coupled with disease, that nearly exterminated the population and reduced the possibility of Taíno descendants in the region. In fact, the censi from Cuba and the Dominican Republic do not even list “*indio*” as a category.¹⁸²

As is known, the so-called Discovery of the New World was a misnomer in itself: it was only a “discovery” to the Western world. The Amerindians had occupied American territory for millennia, unaware of their European counterparts. The Spanish-Taíno encounter was, thus, and in reality, a mutual “discovery.” And yet, from the moment Colón’s fleet touched ground in the Antilles, Europe was placed at the world’s center—the metropolis—and America on the periphery. Thenceforth this placement allowed Europeans to dictate the latter’s existence. That is, Europeans saw the “New World” as a space of change, whereby Europeans would correct their past mistakes in this “primitive,” Eden-like utopia. Antonello Gerbi noted this representation in literary trends began as early as the 17th century, where “criticisms of European society found expression in the utopias, many of which had American settings”, yet Ezequiel Martínez Estrada argued that works as early as Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516) shared striking similarities with Cuba (Gerbi 209). Since Europeans themselves were chronicling both conquest and colonization, the Amerindian became a Western construct as these accounts were suffused with sacred overtones—Spain had been chosen by God to evangelize the indigenous population and Amerindian *caciques* had to be portrayed as powerful pagan warriors taken down by brave *conquistadors*. These representations reinforced the

¹⁸² The Dominican Republic census does have the category “*mestizo*” and the Cuban census only has “*mulato*.”

dichotomy of civilization and barbarity by presenting the Amerindian in a negative light. Whereas Europeans painted themselves as cultured and civilized, the Amerindians were portrayed as sinful, fierce, and uncivilized, even participating in cannibalism. Famous European texts such as Michel de Montaigne's "Of Cannibals" (1580) and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-1) contemplate this barbaric stereotype. Much like African slaves, the then indigenous population was categorized as sub-human. This was not, however, the only colonial representation of the Amerindian. On the other side of the spectrum, chroniclers who wrote in defense of the indigenous population, such as Las Casas and Montaigne, themselves created Eurocentric portraits of the Amerindian. In this light, the binary opposition of "civilization and barbarity" was reversed: Amerindians were innocent, peaceful beings (civilization) who fell victim to the *conquistador's* cruelty, lust, and greed (barbarity). As Tzvetan Todorov has noted in relation to the conquest of Mexico, colonial chronicles created a mythic and idyllic vision of the Amerindian that fit one of the two stereotypes: either "fierce savage" or "noble savage." The "fierce savage" was the "barbaric" Amerindian; the "noble savage" its "civilized" counterpart. And yet, Todorov notes one important point in common: "These two contradictory myths...have a common base...lack of knowledge of the Indians" (57).

Anacaona and Hatuey were, in Las Casas' chronicles, prime examples of the "noble savage," a portrayal that became an integral part of their recurring myths. Though certainly "primitive," the "noble savage" was not, however, "barbaric." In fact, "noble savages" destroyed the established binary by demonstrating that their "primitive" nature was in fact more "civilized" than the so-called "civilized" European. Las Casas was the first to construct Anacaona and Hatuey as "noble savages" and achieved this in only two

steps. First, he described the *caciques* as peaceful, happy leaders before the Spanish arrival; and second, he justified their rebellious actions by determining that the *conquistadors'* corruption led Anacaona and Hatuey to violence. As such, Anacaona and Hatuey were not born rebels; rather, Spanish cruelty and corruption forced them to rebel. This demonstration of uncharacteristic “barbarity” revealed the direness of the colonial situation and clarified Las Casas’ argument that Anacaona and Hatuey, while “primitive,” displayed a greater “civilized” nature than the Spaniards did. Whether or not Las Casas created the “noble savage” consciously, this figure was vital to his goal of painting the *conquistador* in a negative light. And yet, the “noble savage” did not, in actuality, succeed. In fact, as these myths demonstrate, the “noble savage” was exterminated as much as the “fierce savage,” thus questioning the very nature of their sacrifice. Was it in vain? This question becomes central to later versions as the authors and director contemplate the conflictive nature of these myths.

The fact that the “noble savage” construct recurs in later versions demonstrates that this sub-mytheme becomes central to the Anacaona and Hatuey myths. Each version begins by creating peaceful, happy indigenous settings; Anacaona and Hatuey are depicted as strong, just *caciques*; Spaniards arrive and destroy this paradise, and thus force Anacaona and Hatuey to rebel. Each version, then, builds upon Las Casas’ “noble savage” description by entering into Anacaona’s and Hatuey’s internal worlds, exposing their intimate thoughts. It is therefore hardly a surprise that as these *caciques* are forced to rebel against the Spaniards, they also feel regret because their actions are beyond their control and, perhaps, because their sacrifice was in vain. Indeed, they would never have taken such rebellious action had they not been provoked against their own will, thereby

justifying their show of “barbarity.” Anacaona and Hatuey are victims of corrupt power; their rebellion a metaphor (and justification) in different versions for the contemporary scenarios they represent. Therefore, as Las Casas used the “noble savage” to deconstruct the established binary oppositions of civilization and barbarity, so the more recent authors and director we have read had the same intention for their respective causes. Additionally, these versions sought to resolve the paradox of these myths by focusing upon the question: what can “noble savages” do in the future to avoid the same demise as Anacaona and Hatuey?

Given its centuries-long success, perhaps the “noble savage” was able to unite differing races and nationalities. Perhaps Creole élites did feel a connection to Anacaona and Hatuey’s royal lineage and strong leadership during the Conquest. Perhaps marginalized groups, too, related to Taíno exploitation under the Spanish *conquistadors*. And yet, the Anacaona and Hatuey myths provide only a false perception of unity—none of the parties united were actual Taínos or undertook effective rebellions. This, however, was irrelevant. By then the Conquest had nearly extinguished the entire Taíno population, thereby minimizing the chances of a Taíno rebellion, or use of their myths in order to promote non-Taíno causes, a resistance they may well have faced by using instead, for example, an African figure. And yet, the history of the “noble savage” indicates that if in fact there had been a strong Taíno coalition to contest these versions, it would still have made little difference—the Amerindian has continued to exist in a subaltern position throughout Latin America since the colonial era. Bollain’s film makes this clear by highlighting the Cochabamba indigenous protests. Although scholars search to uncover the Amerindian’s voice in chronicles, hieroglyphs, and *quipus*, postcolonial studies

indicate that the indigenous population lost agency during the Conquest and Colonization and continues to struggle to this day for representation in Western hegemonic discourse. While it can be argued that Las Casas used the Anacaona and Hatuey myths in order to promote structural changes that would benefit the remaining Taínos, later versions ignored this. Indeed, their own use of these myths within nationalist causes only upheld the postcolonial argument that the Amerindian has and continues to be spoken for. The fact that Anacaona's and Hatuey's deaths led to Taíno genocide made their particular situation easy to sympathize with; their consistent rebellion against a difficult adversary laudable. Their status as "noble savages," however, is precisely, and paradoxically, what made their myths functional. On the one hand, this construct was recognizable to the public and uncontested; on the other, it showcased hegemonic corruption, justifying those who rebelled against it. Had the versions presented Anacaona and Hatuey as "fierce savages," their myths would have lost their function as myths of rebellion.

Roberto Fernández Retamar broached this paradox in his essay *Calibán: Apuntes sobre la cultura de nuestra América* (1971). He contemplated the then construction of "barbarity"—represented by Caliban, an anagram for "cannibal" derived from "Carib,"¹⁸³ the barbaric Taíno counterpart—in his native Cuba. His scope ranges from Cristóbal Colón's diaries and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611) to José Martí's "Nuestra América" (1891) and José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), up to postcolonial analyses in O. Mannoni's *Psychologie de la colonisation (Propero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization)* (1950; translated 1956)¹⁸⁴ and Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête. Adaptation de*

¹⁸³ As the autor explains: "Esta imagen del *caribe/canibal* contrasta con la otra imagen de hombre americano que Colón ofrece en sus páginas: la del *Arauco* de las grandes Antillas—nuestro *taíno* en primer lugar—, a quien presenta como pacífico, manso, incluso temeroso y cobarde" (14).

¹⁸⁴ This psychoanalysis of the postcolonial subject in Martinique was highly criticized by Franz Fanon.

“La Tempête” de Shakespeare pour un théâtre nègre (1969). Calling upon Shakespeare’s famous play, Fernández Retamar noted that the dichotomy between Prospero (civilization) and Caliban (barbarity) has defined Latin-American identity since the Conquest. The spirit Ariel, who helps Prospero, is the “noble savage,” while the slave Caliban represents the “fierce savage.” The question, therefore, has been: is Latin America Ariel or Caliban? While Rodó’s famous *Ariel* positioned Latin America (represented by Ariel) against North America (represented by Caliban), Fernández Retamar argued that, although carrying a negative connotation, Latin America has always been Caliban: colonized by Prospero, his barbaric identity a Eurocentric construction, Caliban paradoxically fights for his true freedom from Prospero, all the while describing his reality through the language of the colonizer. He concludes that Latin American culture, therefore, did not help the colonizer like Ariel; rather, it is the “child of revolution” opposed to colonialisms. Latin American culture can only exist if Latin America exists, which, as a communist, Fernández Retamar believed was through socialism, as opposed to a capitalist system that historically divided the nation.¹⁸⁵

While the authors and director studied here do not project this political sentiment, there is a definitive urgency to honor Anacaona and Hatuey as rebels who began the revolutionary efforts that they themselves were continuing. As such, each author and director used the *caciques* in order to define Latin American culture and, as Fernández Retamar explained, fight to exist. Therefore, while Anacaona and Hatuey embody the

¹⁸⁵ The author notes: “...nuestra cultura es —y sólo puede ser— hija de la revolución, de nuestro multiseccular rechazo a todos los colonialismos; nuestra cultura, al igual que toda cultura, requiere como primera condición nuestra propia existencia” (79-80). In response to Mariátegui’s statement, “Hispanoamérica, Latinoamérica, como se prefiera...no encontrará su unidad en el orden burgués. Este orden nos divide, forzosamente, en pequeños nacionalismos. A Norteamérica sajona le toca coronar y cerrar la civilización capitalista. El porvenir de la América latina es socialista,” Fernández Retamar states, “Ese porvenir, que ya ha empezado, acabará por hacer incomprensible la ociosa pregunta sobre nuestra existencia” (81).

spirit of Ariel—the “noble savage” who aided the colonizer (Bartolomé de las Casas)—the versions presented here depart from this by embodying Caliban’s spirit of relentless rebellion that serves the colonized, not the colonizer. Each version signals the importance of Anacaona’s and Hatuey’s ultimate sacrifice, inciting their rebellious spirit in order to bring attention to contemporary issues, and, as literature, also reminds its audience that these Taíno *caciques* ultimately failed. In each version, therefore, the myth is only a starting point. It is up to future generations to continue the fight that Anacaona and Hatuey lost.

Conclusion

Artists and intellectuals have meditated on and reinvented Latin American historical figures since their first appearance in colonial chronicles. Hernán Cortés, Cristóbal Colón, and Lope de Aguirre are but a few of the European figures fictionalized in literature and film, most recently in visual formats: the Portuguese film *Cristóvão Colombo-O Enigma* (2007), the Spanish television series *Isabel* and *Carlos, Rey Emperador* (2015-), the American film *Riverworld* (2010), respectively. While these explorers, emperors, and *conquistadors* have been portrayed in positive and negative lights, most versions focus upon the latter, a likely result of adverse portrayals in chronicles such as Las Casas’. As for indigenous figures, Anacaona and Hatuey were not the only Amerindians fictionalized in literary and filmic adaptations. Malinche and Moctezuma, for example, have been reinterpreted for centuries, most recently in Helen Heightsman Gordon’s historical novel *Malinalli of the Fifth Sun: The Slave Girl Who Changed the Fate of Mexico and Spain* (2011). As in the case of European figures, their Amerindian counterparts were also typically depicted in two ways: either as innocent

victims of Spanish exploitation, or else as barbaric warriors defeated by civilized *conquistadors*.

The representation of European and Amerindian figures was a direct result of the Eurocentric dichotomy of civilization and barbarity established after the Discovery, whereby the European was civilized and the Amerindian, barbarous. The portrayal of the “fierce savage” in colonial texts exemplifies these opposing sides. As we see in the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, however, chroniclers such as Las Casas exploited this civilization/barbarity dichotomy by portraying the “noble savage,” a Eurocentric construction that deconstructed the established binary oppositions by presenting the “primitive” Amerindians as civilized and the European, barbaric. As opposed to the “fierce savage,” whose barbarity warranted his demise, the “noble savage” was a victim of the Conquest and, in Anacaona’s and Hatuey’s case, the epitome of rebellion against corrupt powers. Their deaths were a sacrifice that ensured marginal populations, whether as an influence in future Spanish policies in the New World, an example to those who later fought against corrupt hegemony, or national symbols that united different groups under a shared cultural heritage. Subsequently, this ultimate sacrifice characterized Anacaona and Hatuey as myths of martyrdom.

The prevalence of Anacaona and Hatuey versions is a testament to the relevance of these myths in postcolonial Latin America. While indigenous groups across the continent have made great strides in combatting corrupt governments, they continue to be marginalized under political structures established during colonial times. And yet, the numerous references to these Taíno *caciques*, in literature, as well as in pop culture, reveal the extent to which Anacaona and Hatuey are embedded in Latin America’s

unconscious cultural heritage, particularly in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. Not only are there historical markers that commemorate their sacrifice; today, Anacaona and Hatuey are hotels, streets, songs, drinks—all consumer commodities. Therefore, although the Anacaona and Hatuey myths represent Latin America's historical past—and remind us what can happen when corruption prevails—they also form part of the continent's collective memory, uniting races and nationalities through a shared heritage.

Chapter Four

Andrés Chilibuquina: An Ecuadorian *Indigenista* Myth

"...su influencia sobre el público durará mientras subsista la realidad que describe."
(Adalbert Dessau referring to *Huasipungo*, 226)

"Escribe lo que viviste, a eso se le llama memorias...Serán las memorias tuyas y mías,
las memorias de Andrés Chilibuquina"
(*Memorias de Andrés Chilibuquina*, 211)

Introduction

In 2013, Carlos Arcos Cabrera released his third novel, *Memorias de Andrés Chilibuquina*. Published for young readers under Alfaguara's "Roja" series, the book was sold as a bundle, which included a bookmark and a "Student Companion" for analysis. The novel received rave reviews and Ecuadorian newspaper headlines read: "Andrés Chilibuquina del siglo XXI," "Retrato espectacular de Andrés Chilibuquina," "Carlos Arcos Cabrera: la cultura andina es una experta constructora de sincretismos," and "Mi obra es un homenaje crítico a *Huasipungo*." It was evident that Andrés Chilibuquina's name was familiar to the typical Ecuadorian. As the Amerindian protagonist of Jorge Icaza's *Huasipungo* (1934), one of Ecuador's most celebrated texts, Chilibuquina's story was required reading for Ecuadorian students. He was a national symbol of indigenous exploitation—a constant reminder of Ecuador's colonial past. His continued reappearance in 20th-century versions signaled his integration into Ecuador's collective memory. He was, in essence, a national myth. Arcos Cabrera's novel was not the first adaptation of *Huasipungo*, but the fact that it was geared towards younger audiences suggests that Andrés Chilibuquina's legacy needed to be revived.

This chapter examines Andrés Chilibuquina's evolution into a national myth. The first section explores Chilibuquina's origin in Icaza's *Huasipungo* and the elements that

led to the popularity of this *indigenista* text. It then analyzes three versions of Chiliquinga's story: Ricardo Descalzi's play *El huasipungo de Andrés Chiliquinga* (1964), Gustavo Guayasamín's short film *El cielo para la Cunshi, ¡carajo!* (1975), and Arcos Cabrera's novel. Each version of the Chiliquinga myth is analyzed along with how these works keep his memory alive by applying his story to contemporary social issues. The chapter concludes by examining the core mythemes of each version and an analysis of its function as a narrative of indigenous justice and memory constructed from its sub-mytheme: the postcolonial subaltern.

Andrés Chiliquinga and *Huasipungo*: Origin of a Modern Myth

Andrés Chiliquinga first appears during a period of economic and ideological change in Latin America. The Andean region suffered a crisis in the 1930s that almost destroyed Ecuador's economy: a pestilence spread across the small nation destroying the cacao crop, its primary export. Rich landowners—*latifundistas*—living abroad off the wealth of their farms were forced to return to their poor farmhands and to a country that for the first time was feeling hunger. This crisis, coupled with continued political corruption and instability¹⁸⁶ plus the persistent economic gap between the white élite and the Amerindian, gave fuel to a group of young Ecuadorian writers to expose the country's social realities. Known as the *Generación del 30*, this group's members included, among others, Joaquín Gallegos Lara (1909-47), Demetrio Aguilera Malta (1909-81), Enrique Gil Gilbert (1912-73), and Jorge Icaza (1906-78). Their goal was to create an innovative

¹⁸⁶ In a 1971 interview with Enrique Ojeda, Jorge Icaza reflects on the political climate of Ecuador: "...en este país desde la [I]ndependencia – si usted estudia nuestra historia – encuentra que el pueblo hace la revolución, el pueblo sale a las calles y se deja matar y cuando triunfa busca a un señor latifundista, a un marqués, a un señorón de estos que siempre ha hecho la política y que es un sinvergüenza y le lleva a la magistratura. Así toda la vida, desde la [I]ndependencia. Y en cada asonada revolucionaria ha sido lo mismo" (124).

literature that relied on social realism—their portrayal of Ecuador would be authentic, as opposed to their Romantic predecessors. Although the *Generación del 30* spread out over three regions—Quito, Guayaquil and El Austro¹⁸⁷—their message was unified: Ecuador (and subsequently Latin America) needed a “*literatura de combate*”.¹⁸⁸ In a 1970 interview with Gilberto Mantilla Garzón, Icaza summarized this group’s intention: “Somos como los cinco dedos de una mano para golpear la conciencia nacional” (42).

There was also an ideological shift during this period. In Latin America, positivism had been the leading ideology among the ruling élite as they embarked on nation-building projects after independence from Spain.¹⁸⁹ These nationalist campaigns, coupled with a desire to compete on an economic scale with the U.S. and Europe, proved that a scientific approach fit in with an elitist vision of a progressive society. There was general consensus that the ruling class viewed indigenous and *mestizo* groups as roadblocks to progress and that positivism promoted economic development. It also served as a justification of the persecution of these subaltern groups. Nevertheless, the fallout of World War I (1914-19) altered this perception, as described by Roberto González Echevarría, by “tearing down the ideological certainties of the West” (149).

¹⁸⁷ El Austro is a southern region that shares its border with Perú. It includes the cities of Loja, Cuenca, Zamora Chinchipe, and El Oro.

¹⁸⁸ The term “*literatura de combate*” has been used by several critics (see March and Tobío, Campana, among others) to describe Icaza’s perception of his work. The quote used comes from Gilberto Mantilla Garzón’s 1970 interview with Icaza for the Argentine journal *Mundo Nuevo*: “Desde hace mucho tiempo he expresado que a Hispanoamérica y al Ecuador les corresponde una literatura de combate” (40).

¹⁸⁹ Positivism emerged in Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century as the most prominent scientific movement to highlight the separation of science and “mythical thought.” The French Revolution (1789-99) had created an environment of anarchy in France, and members of the Generation of 1820 sought to define the nature of society. Auguste Comte (1789-1857), founder of Positivism, and his essay *Plan des travaux scientifiques nécessaires pour réorganiser la société* (1824) argued for a scientific model of human knowledge that was ordered into three models: mythical or theological model, metaphysical, and positivistic. In taking a scientific approach, Comte believed that the use of a scientific method (theory and observation) provided statistical knowledge that could aid predictions in society. Thus, man’s reliance on science to understand and explain his surroundings would eliminate any other means of explanation, such as religion and myth, and evolve a progressive society.

This was most notable in the decline of positivism and the rise of anthropology—an “antirevolutionary reaction” and “general revolt against Positivism” (González Echevarría 150). The debate between positivism and anthropology reflected the sentiment that European culture was no longer the goal of evolution; rather, Latin America could look to pre-Columbian civilizations in order to reinterpret the continent’s history.¹⁹⁰

In the aftermath of the 1917 Russian Revolution, socialist ideology had also reached intellectual circles in Latin America, stirring the economic debate. On the psychoanalytic front, Sigmund Freud’s theories also became popular in the intellectual community. These new theories, though also imported from Europe, posed a threat to conservative Latin American governments. Liberal thought, especially Socialism, was equated to rebellion, and the *Generación del 30* knew their words were firearms. Each group focused upon socio-economic issues that were particular to their own region: coastal workers, highland Amerindians and *mestizos*, and lowland *cholos*.¹⁹¹ The Quito group, more than others, saw the colonial imprint on the economic system more dramatically due to *gamonalismo*, the semi-feudal agrarian system that consisted of large pieces of land worked by Amerindians for little to no pay. Although the Amerindians were given *huasipungos*, small plots of land, they lived in almost complete poverty; all cultivation went to the *latifundista*. Obvious similarities exist to the colonial *encomienda* system in which the Amerindians worked the Spanish *encomendero*’s land and in return were taken care of economically and spiritually. It was this evident reverence for

¹⁹⁰ González Echevarría explains this further: “What the new discourse seeks is not so much knowledge about the Other as much as knowledge about the Other’s knowledge...Anthropology...offered those countries the possibility of claiming an origin different from the west...[and] could correct the errors of the conquest, atone for the crimes of the past, and make for a new history” (150).

¹⁹¹ *Cholo* is a term equivalent to *mestizo* in Ecuador. In other contexts, it can also refer to an Amerindian with knowledge, and even practice, of “Western” customs. An example of this latter reference is Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala.

Amerindian exploitation, coupled with the cycle of political corruption, that inspired the *Generación del 30*'s writings. As Jorge Icaza later reflected, "[e]scribí *Huasipungo* no para que se devuelvan esos míseros lotes a los indígenas, sino para romper el cerco asfixiante que nos hundía" (Mantilla Garzón 44).

The critique of the *Generación del 30* upon *gamonalismo* posed a direct threat to the *latifundistas*, whose wealth also held political influence. Furthermore, their writings brought attention to a subject that had never been broached: the subaltern¹⁹² Amerindian population. The struggle to bring attention to subaltern groups, however, was hardly unique to Ecuador; rather, it had manifested itself as a movement of regionalist culture throughout the entire continent. As opposed to *indianista* texts such as *Siboneísta* poetry, Salomé Ureña's *Anacaona* (1880) or Francisco Sellén's *Hatuey: poema dramático en cinco actos* (1891), *indigenismo*, as it would later be called, emerged in Argentina and Mexico during the 1920s and reached its peak in the Andean region during the 1930s. One of its unique features was its critical analysis of the continent's social and political issues by applying sociological and anthropological concepts to indigenous contexts. This was in response to Latin America's increasingly skewed balance towards capitalism which, like positivist thought, threatened the indigenous population. *Indigenista* writers sought, therefore, to project such economic issues onto a political plane, in search of social and political vindication for the indigenous populations. The written word was their tool to paint a realistic portrait of their country's problems and to uncover the customs, tradition, pain, and exploitation of a silenced indigenous population. The

¹⁹² The term "subaltern" here, and in the remainder of this chapter, refers to the postcolonial subject who is identified as "Other"—deemed different or "exotic" by the Westerner—and therefore occupies a space which denies any dialogue with Western discourse. The result is that the subaltern individual or, in many cases, population continues to be defined by the West and "spoken for." See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*

majority of these writers were *mestizos*, a detail that positioned them between the white élite and the Amerindian. Acting as interpreters of Amerindian culture, then *indigenistas* sought ultimately to bridge the gap between both social groups.

Although *indigenista* writers were praised for their efforts to uncover subaltern exploitation, there were critics who believed that their true intention was to vindicate the *mestizo* population's subaltern position by extending their struggle to all exploited parties. In fact, *mestizos* had recently gained access to education and this had opened up a new opportunity for upward social mobility.¹⁹³ *Indigenista* writers had a dual motivation—to bring attention to both the indigenous struggle and their own group's marginality—, a fact which made Ángel Rama argue in time that the work of this movement essentially exploited the indigenous masses:

...the masses served as a cover, given that the masses faced more flagrant injustices than they [the *mestizos*] did; in addition, the masses enjoyed the undeniable prestige of having forged an original culture in the past, something that could not be said about the emerging lower middle class. In their silence, the masses were, if anything, even more eloquent, and they were in any case more conveniently interpretable by anyone who had the proper tools: the written word and the fine arts. (97-8)

And yet, these writers were not only tied to the Amerindian population through their mixed heritage. Many had physical ties to the culture as well. Peruvian novelist José

¹⁹³ It should be noted that the Andean *mestizo* movement was relatively stagnant compared to other *criollo* or regionalist movements in the rest of Latin America. In these other regions, Central America and México for example, members of the upper class had joined the movement by the 1920s. Ángel Rama explains that the Andean *mestizo* population began to gain enough momentum to “absorb other middle social groups into its universe of values” through spurts in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s when they “climbed higher through a succession of intellectual contributions until it could test its ability to handle comfortably the tools it had inherited from the upper classes” (100).

María Arguedas (1911-1969) is perhaps the best example. After the death of his mother at the age of two, Arguedas fell into the care of Amerindian servants and became so immersed in Andean culture that he later published in both Spanish and Quechua. Many other *indigenista* authors had direct contact at a young age with the indigenous population. Icaza and Demetrio Aguilera Malta (1912-81), fellow *Generación del 30* member, for example, spent part of their childhood living alongside other Amerindian and *mestizo* children in Chimborazo and Guayaquil, respectively. Despite their participation in indigenous culture and witnessing exploitation first-hand, *indigenista* novels, according to José Carlos Mariátegui, Ángel Rama and Antonio Cornejo Polar, failed ultimately to present authentic portrayals of the Amerindian for a simple reason: the authors were not indigenous. They seemingly looked into unknown worlds. This sentiment is best described in Mariátegui's well-known remark to the effect that:

La literatura indigenista no puede darnos una versión rigurosamente verista del indio. Tiene que idealizarlo y estilizarlo. Tampoco puede darnos su propia ánima. Es todavía una literatura de mestizos. Por eso se llama indigenista y no indígena. Una literatura indígena, si debe venir, vendrá a su tiempo. Cuando los propios indios estén en grado de producirla. (275)

The reality, however, was that Amerindians did not have access to education and therefore *indigenista* writers acted as “interpreters” of the indigenous struggle.

It is precisely during this time of economic change, political corruption, and the influx of liberal ideas that Jorge Icaza published *Huaspungo* (1934). The story follows the most common theme in *indigenista* texts: a Creole élite oppresses the Amerindian

population for economic gain. Ángel F. Rojas explains this in his *La novela ecuatoriana* (1948):

Un cura fanático y dominador. Un teniente político sumiso a la voluntad de los señores feudales del predio contiguo. Un amo blanco gamonal que explota a los indios que viven en su latifundio y viola a sus mujeres y a sus hijas. Se completa así el terceto trágico de expoliadores de la raza india, que luego veremos presente en las novelas y cuentos sobre la realidad agraria del altiplano. (175)

Huasipungo is the story of Andrés Chiliquinga, an Andean Amerindian who suffers under *latifundista* Don Alfonso Pereira and his *mestizo* peons' cruel treatment. Andrés and the Cuchitambo community live in deplorable, starving conditions. After Andrés steals a decaying bull carcass to feed the community, Cunshi, his partner, dies from food poisoning. Unable to pay for a Christian burial—a plot next to the church that would ensure her salvation—Andrés steals one of Pereira's cows and sells it off in order to pay for the cost. Pereira discovers the robbery and has Andrés tied to the whipping post in front of the entire community. Deprived of food and removed from their land by Pereira's economic project, Andrés leads an Amerindian revolt against the *latifundista* that results in his death and the destruction of the Cuchitambo community. Andrés' tragic story represents the tragedy of an entire population. Likewise, this single Ecuadorian tale was but one among many across the continent. In Icaza's words, "...dentro de esa cosa pequeña, particular, netamente particular, hay una profunda realidad humana, que es la que en definitiva alcanza un carácter universal" (Mantilla Garzón 41).

Icaza himself never identified his inspiration for Andrés Chilibringa, and only claimed that *Huasipungo* was a response to the Amerindian exploitation he witnessed as a child and later when travelling with his *Compañía Dramática Nacional*. Seemingly, Icaza only intended for Andrés' story to be one of many. His inspiration for Don Alfonso Pereira, however, was his own uncle, Don Enrique Coronel, as he stated in a 1961 interview:

Fíjese, la base emotiva y de conocimiento nace a los seis años con la ida a la hacienda de este tío mío...Y luego, al salir a Quito, la comparación que yo hago con todo el elemento que gobierna a este país, elemento que está formado por latifundistas. Entonces, yo tengo que simbolizar, buscar el tipo, crear el carácter que cuadre con el latifundista, el de este país. Y nace lógicamente de mi tío. En él vi cómo era un latifundista y luego después...vi cómo este latifundista no era único sino que eran muchos...Y lo mismo se puede decir del indio. Yo no escogí entre los indios a ese.

(Ojeda 123-4)

Although Icaza described himself as a “devorador de libros,” it remains unclear whether *Huasipungo* was inspired by a specific text, myth, or legend (Ojeda 114). But in the years before writing *Huasipungo*, the author did mention such an interest in the French literary journal *La Petite Illustration*. Indeed, social and revolutionary pieces, such as Jules Romain's *Le Dictateur* (1910)—a four-act farce on French political bureaucracy—were of particular interest to the Ecuadorian *Generación del 30* and most

likely fueled much of their own critiques.¹⁹⁴ Thus, *Huasipungo*'s story apparently was not based on any one specific text, nor was Andrés Chilibringa a representation of one particular individual, and, in fact, several Ecuadorian authors created novels with similar structures and themes as *Huasipungo*.¹⁹⁵

Huasipungo's initial reception was mixed. As Icaza presumed, the conservative government perceived the text as "rebellious." The gritty, violent scenes and the foul language also shocked the conservative elite population. In fact, the book did not receive any positive reviews until it reached Argentina, as seen in A. Pego's 1935 scholarly book review, which praised *Huasipungo* for its originality and realism—a prime example of the new "*indo-americano*" movement in Ecuador: "*Huasipungo* no es una novela, es la biografía del indio escrita con arranque, con vigor, con trazos duros como rocas, sin eufemismos, sin otro alarde literario que un juego de metáforas que ponen de relieve la modernidad, originalidad y primitivismo del autor" (26). Since its original publication, the novel has received a vast array of negative criticism, particularly from Ecuadorian critics. Icaza's writing style is the center of most critiques, which focus primarily upon the novel's language—particularly the melodramatic images of Amerindian exploitation—and the characters' superficial representation—or, in other words, his inauthentic portrayal of Amerindian language and culture. Benjamín Carrión stated that the novel had virtually no character development and that, "...quizás no le interese hacerlo. El prefiere ser el creador de 'problemas humanos,' como personajes de novela" (597).

¹⁹⁴ Icaza and *La Compañía Dramática Nacional* liked *Le Dictateur* so much that they translated it into Spanish. The government attempted to prohibit its representation, but eventually allowed it fifteen days later (Ojeda 116).

¹⁹⁵ For example, Jorge Fernández's *Agua* (1936), G. Humberto Mata's *Sumag allpa* (1942), and Jorge Rivadeneyra's *Ya está amaneciendo* (1957), to name a few.

Jean Franco has argued that Icaza's Amerindian characters, especially Andrés (the victim), were not presented as humans, thus making it impossible for the reader to sympathize with them or their situation. Instead, they were converted into exotic beings, as the narrator described the "unusual" world they lived in. One example she cited is the scene after Andrés is beaten for stealing a cow and uses "una mezcla rara de aguardiente, orines, tabaco y sal" to clean his wounds—an "exotic" mixture to the white or *mestizo* reader (182-4). Gustavo García has argued that Icaza's animalistic descriptions of indigenous eating habits only perpetuated the Amerindian as "Other": "En efecto, los rasgos negativos que Jorge Icaza atribuye a los indígenas refuerzan ('confirman') la tesis colonialista de considerarlos inferiores y de ser, por tanto, objeto de explotación y exterminio 'natural' por parte de la oligarquía latifundista comprometida con el 'progreso' de la patria" (46). And yet, despite their negative reviews, these critics insist(ed) that Icaza's novel was in fact an important addition to the *indigenista* canon. In response to the paradoxical nature of these critiques, Jorge Enrique Adoum, arguably Icaza's most adamant advocate, stated: "...estamos en favor del indio cuya 'situación' *Huasipungo* denuncia, pero no en favor del libro, porque 'exagera' esa situación; o bien, estaríamos por la causa del indio, tal como la describe Icaza, si no fuera porque Icaza nos lo hace 'repugnante'" (25).

Icaza did not take all this criticism in stride. In fact, he employed a number of technical revisions to the 1950 (and final) edition: (1) the amplification of the Amerindians' personalities, in which he allows room to permit them to display their mode of thinking; (2) downplaying episodes that showed the Amerindians partaking in "beastly" conduct; and (3) giving the Amerindians last names in an attempt to

individualize them (Larson). But as Adoum suggests above, the ultimate question was whether Icaza's style deflected the novel's intended purpose: to bring Ecuador's sociopolitical problems to the forefront of the national argument. Mario Campana contemplated this issue in relation to other important literary works:

¿No tiene acaso razón Clemencín en la mayoría si no en todas las acotaciones estilísticas y sintácticas que hace al *Quijote*? ¿No abundan en *Les Misérables* divagaciones innecesarias y una palabrería por momentos insoportable? ¿No tiene razón Nabokov cuando señala los descuidos tan frecuentes en las novelas de Dostoievski? ¿Son estas novelas y autores menos importantes por eso? (86)

Bernard Dulsey noted further: "Para esos críticos que sostienen que la literatura con un mensaje social dominante deja de ser literatura, se sigue que mientras más intenso el mensaje, menos mérito artístico encontrarán en la obra" ("El arte" 43). And yet, the fact remained that despite the valid criticisms of Icaza's writing, the novel's core theme impacted audiences both in and outside Ecuador.

As *Huasipungo* remains his most famous novel outside Ecuador, Icaza's life work is often reduced to an *indigenista* meditation on Amerindian exploitation. And yet, examining the trajectory of his publications shows that this theme was but one of the many aspects he deemed "problematic" in Ecuador. In effect, only two of his seven novels—*Huasipungo* and *Huairapamushcas* (1948)—treat directly the Amerindian, while the remaining ones focus upon Icaza's own *mestizo* social group. For Icaza, the rift between Spanish and Amerindian cultures was just as much the *mestizo*'s internal

struggle as the country's external one. Icaza's reading of the *mestizo* psyche was a way to reconcile this divide, as he himself expressed:

Cada uno de nosotros siente que dos sombras nos rodean, nos impulsan: la del abuelo, el conquistador español y la de la abuela, la mujer india. Es urgente reconciliar estas dos sombras... Hay entre nosotros *indigenistas* que quieren rechazar la herencia española e *hispanizantes* que desprecian la aportación indígena. Hay que aprender a amar ambas aportaciones. Amar lo uno como lo otro, para que de la fusión completa y total de las razas y de sus culturas nazca una civilización nueva, un hombre nuevo, que es y será el hombre libre de América. (his emphasis, Moreno Yáñez 11-12)

Such concern for "racial and cultural" reconciliation has existed in Latin America since colonial times. As member of the first generation of *mestizos* in the Spanish colonies, El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's (1539-1616) *Comentarios reales* (1609) began the dialogue between Spanish and Amerindian cultures. Mexican intellectual José Vasconcelos (1882-1959) explored similar themes in his *La raza cósmica* (1925), where he suggested the creation of a "fifth race"—a mixture of each race's best qualities. Vasconcelos, like Icaza, signaled that this new, hybrid race could only exist in America: a space of change. Another interesting element from the above statement is that it opens up Icaza's understanding of the term "*indigenista*." In fact, Icaza did not consider himself an *indigenista* until three years after publishing *Huasipungo*, as shown in a 1961 interview:

Después [de *Huasipungo*] sigue *Cholos* escrita en 1937. En ella ya tomo el camino del mestizo. Porque lo que al principio nació como una defensa

hasta cierto punto romántica y violenta del indio la continúo ahora como indigenista que defiende al indio pero no por el indio solo, ni como que ese conglomerado pudiera ser un país o una cultura, sino en cuanto el indio está metido dentro de nosotros, de nuestra vida étnica, de nuestra raza cultural, de nuestra raíz económica. Así yo soy indigenista. (Ojeda 125)

Icaza's interpretation of *indigenismo* signals that it was very much a *mestizo* movement, as Mariátegui, Rama and Cornejo Polar all went on to point out. This is perhaps why Icaza cites *Cholos* as his very first *indigenista* text, where he first treats the *mestizo* dilemma. Differing from the popular definition of *indigenismo*, Icaza did not see it as extending sympathy to the Amerindian population in an attempt to find vindication for the marginalized *mestizo* group. Rather, it was a means of overcoming the marginalization of the Amerindian within each individual person and, by extension, social and political structures. This was undoubtedly a reaction to the *mestizo* who rejected his or her Amerindian heritage in order to assimilate the white élite. Icaza's preoccupation was with the individual, not the "masses," and yet this very issue of (post)colonial identity is one that has plagued the intellectual's mind in all former colonies.¹⁹⁶

The question, therefore, is: if Icaza did not define *Huasipungo* as *indigenista*, then what is it? By all accounts, the novel fits perfectly the accepted definition of *indigenismo*. In fact, it is described as the best example of the movement in Ecuador. And yet, Icaza considered texts like *Huasipungo* to be a "defensa...romántica y violenta del indio." The word "romántica" directs attention to the semantic debate between the terms *indianismo*

¹⁹⁶ See Octavio Paz's *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950; 1959) and Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*.

and *indigenismo* and their blurred borders. *Indianismo* was rooted in colonial literature (1500-1800) and reached its peak during the late 19th-century Romantic period. These works treated the Amerindian “problem” through idealized images; *indigenismo* painted a more realistic one. Naturally, it is unclear when one movement ended and the other began, and hence why, for instance, there is disagreement over whether Clorinda Matto Turner’s *Aves sin nido* (1898) should be considered the first *indigenista* novel. According to Antonio Cornejo Polar, *indigenismo*’s defining characteristic was thematic: “Toda novela indigenista implica una condenación del gamonalismo y una reivindicación de los derechos indígenas...Esta actitud de denuncia y reivindicación suele emplearse para deslindar el indigenismo del indianismo” (“La novela indigenista” 63). The difference was also in viewpoint: *indianismo* offered an outsider’s view into the Amerindian’s world, as *indigenismo*’s was from within. Icaza’s mention that his earlier writings were also “violent” is perhaps a reflection on the *Generación del 30*’s rebellious spirit and their “*literatura de combate*.” Without using such strong images, however, these authors would not have succeeded in “jolting” society. The fact remains that *Huasipungo* is, whether Icaza believed it or not, by all accounts an *indigenista* text. And yet, the novel’s general interpretation focuses almost entirely upon indigenous injustice, overshadowing Icaza’s other critiques.

The better to interpret the novel, and what I believe to be Icaza’s original intention, one ought to pay close attention to the cover of the 1934 first edition of *Huasipungo*. On it there appears a clear picture of its array of themes, beginning with the portrayal of what can be referred to as the “three pillars of society”: the State, the Church and the Law. The cover shows fourteen outlined figures that stem from the center of the

print towards the upper left, each figure identified by the hat worn. The first four outlines are priests, followed by four of police officers, followed by six of bourgeois men in top hats. This is a graphic representation of what I consider to be one of the most important scenes in the novel, where Icaza wields his strongest critique of Ecuador's corrupt powers: the meeting between Pereira, the *mestizo* police lieutenant (Jacinto), and the local priest—the “three pillars.” In this scene, Pereira has been feeling pressure to complete the road project and needs to devise a plan to work the Amerindians harder so that the road can be finished faster. This project is of upmost importance, for as Pereira explains, “Sólo así este pueblo dará un paso definitivo hacia la civilización y el progreso” (125). Thus the “three pillars” power structure is evident from the beginning. As a white upper-class landowner, Pereira holds the most power, thus explaining perhaps why the 1934 cover shows six outlines of bourgeois men as opposed to the four outlines of the other two figures. In the famous scene when the priest arrives thirty minutes late to the meeting, he enters a conversation described as “un diálogo desigual entre el patrón latifundista y el cholo teniente político” (124). As Jacinto inquires about news from the capital, Pereira offers only short, sometimes one-word responses, as if he were annoyed that a *cholo*, or *mestizo*, would assume an élite is interested in engaging in small talk.¹⁹⁷ It is not until the “three pillars” have drunk enough *aguardiente* that the tensions seem to ease: “En alas del alcohol fue creciendo la sinceridad, el coraje y la fantasía del diálogo de los tres hombres—patrón, sacerdote y autoridad” (124). Indeed, power is by far the novel's most

¹⁹⁷ —¿Qué de bueno dejó por nuestro Quito, don Alfonso?
 —Nada.
 —¿Qué hay de bullas? ¿Ya cayó el Gobierno?
 —No. ¡Qué va...!
 —¿Y de guambritas? —insistió el sotanudo cínicamente.
 —Lo mismo—dijo Pereira...
 (124)

developed theme. An evident hierarchy trickles down from the American to the animals in the novel; each individual's power is reflected in actions, thought, and speech.

Each character's race is also important and the division between Jacinto and the *patrón* is further highlighted by each character's speech. Much like the *mestizo*'s mixed cultural heritage, Jacinto speaks in a patois, hybrid form of Spanish between Creole and Amerindian. Although his speech is much more grammatically correct than the Amerindian's, he still employs several *indianisms* and other lexical structures influenced by Quichua, such as the overuse of diminutives.¹⁹⁸ This is evident especially when referring to characters who are higher up the social ladder ("taita curita" and "patroncito") and the use of "pes" in place of "pues." It is unclear whether the priest is white or *mestizo*, but based on syntactical evidence alone, his speech mimics that of the upper class. Nevertheless, over the course of the conversation, it is clear that he, too, views Pereira as a power figure.

A second important element of the 1934 cover is the five outlines of crosses that appear in the upper-left sector. None is physically perfect; and, the right side hangs lower than the left. Numerous interpretations can be derived from this imperfection, the most obvious of which is that it reflects Icaza's critique of Church corruption. The town priest—an extension of the Church—is a corrupt figure—a drunk and a womanizer—who consistently uses the Amerindians' superstition to deceive and manipulate them.¹⁹⁹ However, the crooked cross could also refer to the Amerindian's religious syncretism, or rather, how the influence of pre-Columbian religion creates an imperfect interpretation of

¹⁹⁸ For more information on the influence of Quichua on Ecuadorian dialects, see Carmen Silva-Corvalán's *Spanish in Four Continents*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 1997.

¹⁹⁹ This is perhaps most prominent in two episodes: (1) using the weather to make the Amerindians believe that God is angry with them; and (2) making the Amerindians think that they should pay more money to bury their dead relatives close to the church, so that they will make it to heaven.

Catholicism. Although the Amerindians view the Church as an authority, and the priest as a link between man and God, they also use indigenous religious methods, such as the healing power of the shaman and pre-Columbian burial procedures.

The final visual element of the 1934 cover one must acknowledge is the row of figures that extends from the center of the print diagonally towards the left edge. These six figures, which appear to be solid pillars with a sickle attached to their pointed top, are perhaps the most intriguing sector of the overall graphic. The sickles extending from the pillars, at first glance, recall the Communist hammer and sickle, the symbols for workers and peasants, members of the proletariat. Indeed, in Ecuador, a series of indigenous uprisings from 1920-4 paved the way for Communist ideology.²⁰⁰ In March 1925, Mexican Rafael Ramos Pedrueza (1897-1943) held Communist gatherings in Ecuador and by September 22, he had organized the country's first *Sección Comunista de Propaganda y Acción Lenin*.²⁰¹ In May 1926, amidst increased membership, the *Sección* became the *Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano* (PSE). Ricardo Paredes (1898-1979), one of the most active members, represented the PSE at the 1928 Sixth Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) in Moscow. Here, Paredes urged an alliance with the indigenous population: "The American Amerindians are imbued with a remarkable collectivist spirit... These elements must be utilized in the proletarian State for the construction of socialism" (qtd. in Becker 34). Paredes soon took over the PSE and aligned it with Communist ideology, renaming it the *Partido Comunista Ecuatoriano*

²⁰⁰ These include the following uprisings, all of which ended in bloodshed: March 1920 in Cuenca against taxes; May 1920 in Chimborazo against taxes; August 24, 1920 in Ricuarte, Azuay against taxes; May 1921 in Guano, Chimborazo; November 15, 1922 in Guayaquil; and September 13, 1923 in Tungurahua (Becker xiv).

²⁰¹ According to the "Acta Fundacional," Ramos Pedrueza and the following Ecuadorians founded the *Sección Comunista de Propaganda y Acción Lenin*: Alberto Suárez Dávila, Pablo Charpantier, Fernando Chávez, Timoleón Jácome, F. Karolys, Luis Anda Rumazo, and Manuel Eduardo Rumazo (Kersffeld).

(PCE) in October 1931.²⁰² He also organized several syndicates throughout the Chimborazo province, forging alliances with indigenous movements.²⁰³ Paredes later ran for president in 1934, but lost to conservative Velasco Ibarra (1893-1979).

Although the Communist party was popular in Ecuador during this time period, it is unclear as to whether or not Icaza was a sympathizer. In a 1970 interview with Hernán Rodríguez-Castelo, Icaza reflected upon a 1960 visit he made to the Soviet Union and China, where he met with Nikita Khrushchev, General Secretary of the Communist Party from 1953 to 1964.²⁰⁴ When asked by Khrushchev if he was a Communist, Icaza responded that he was not, yet he described the overall meeting as pleasant. It was not until he travelled to China and met with Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Communist Party from 1945 to 1976, that Icaza commented on Communist extremism.²⁰⁵ Although Icaza was never a party member, the image of the sickle on the 1934 cover of *Huasipungo* could be interpreted as overt sympathy to the Communist party's agenda or, at least with

²⁰² Eudocio Ravines also noted that Manuel Cazón, a young German communist, also aided in organizing the party in Ecuador as the Comintern delegate in Latin America from 1934-8, working particularly in Chile and Ecuador (485).

²⁰³ Becker explains further: "The 1928 Sixth Congress launched what has come to be known as an 'ultraleft' phase with a 'class against class' organizing strategy replacing that of building alliances with other leftist forces. The Comintern urged local parties to work in rural areas, organizing worker-peasant coalitions to demand higher salaries, the returning of lands to peasants, and the cancellation of debts. Even before the Comintern dictated this line, Latin American communists (with Mexico taking lead) had developed strong connections with peasant movements. In Ecuador, even though the PSE had incorporated Indigenous peoples and issues into the founding of the party, the Sixth Congress triggered an intensification of rural activism" (34-5).

²⁰⁴ Icaza took this trip with communist writer and journalist Pedro Jorge Vera and *indigenista* painter Oswaldo Guayasamín. They began in Cuba, where they met Fidel Castro, and then went to China, Russia, and Prague.

²⁰⁵ Icaza explains further: "Este viaje fue extraordinario. En China estuve tres meses; en Rusia, un mes; en los otros países socialistas quince o más días. Lo más saliente, la entrevista con Krushchev. Cuando entramos al Kremlin un grupo grande de personas, preguntó Krushchev: '¿Quién es Jorge Icaza?' Me acerqué diciendo: 'Yo soy.' '¿Usted no es comunista verdad?' –me dijo Krushchev– 'No, señor; yo no soy comunista.' Y él me dijo, con su sentido de humor (una ola de fotógrafos nos fotografiaban mientras me abrazaba): '¿No tiene miedo de retratarse con el diablo mayor del comunismo?' Y yo le respondí 'Si usted no parece diablo, sino un angelote de Rubens.' En China, todo muy distinto. Allí están en la primera etapa. Es extremismo, dijo Lenin, es una enfermedad infantil del comunismo. Y Mao sin nada del humor de Krushchev. Mao en un Buda, un 'magister dixit,' un mito." (Rodríguez-Castelo 19)

regards to agricultural policy and reform.²⁰⁶ This is undoubtedly the result of the influence of communist thought upon Ecuadorian intellectual circles. The novel contains a strong critique of capitalism and, in particular, the threat that the union between Ecuadorian élites and the U.S. posed to the country's future. In the cover, the row of blocks appears to be bodies, with a tiny knob at the top that can be interpreted as the head, with a sickle firmly attached to their backs. The row continues off of the graphic, as if to hint that a multitude of Amerindians comprise the agricultural sector. The figures are abstract, unrecognizable as humans, smaller than the outlined "pillars," all of which could reflect Icaza's critique that viewed the Amerindians as sub-humans stripped of all agency and vulnerable to exploitation by the society's "pillars." Indeed, despite being the backbone of Ecuador's economy, the fact that Amerindian figures appear as smaller than the others is further evidence that they, in no way, are considered "pillars" of society.

Yet another interpretation is that these figures may refer to the *minga* system. According to the *Real Academia Española*, the word comes from the Quichua "minka," a gratuitous, collective effort, often agricultural, performed by friends and neighbors for the good of the community.²⁰⁷ In the meeting, the "three pillars" mention the *minga* system as the only means by which they will be able to complete the road on time, that is bring "civilization" to the towns and benefit economically. Here, Pereira uses an important element of the Amerindian's cultural heritage in order to promote a nationalist campaign

²⁰⁶ Jorge Icaza's political affiliation was unclear. While other *indigenista* authors of Ecuador's *Generación del 30* such as Enrique Gil Gilbert (1912-1973) and Joaquín Gallegos Lara (1911-1947) were active members of the PCE, Icaza tended to skirt the issue when interviewed about politics. The 1960 trip with Vera and Guayasamín, however, would suggest that he was at least interested in learning about Communist ideology.

²⁰⁷ "minga" (Del quechua *mink'a*).

1. f. *N Arg., Chile, Col., Ec., Par. y Perú*. Reunión de amigos y vecinos para hacer algún trabajo gratuito en común.
2. f. *Ec. y Perú*. Trabajo agrícola colectivo y gratuito con fines de utilidad social.

for progress that threatened to exterminate the Amerindian population.²⁰⁸ Icaza thereby criticizes the political agenda of nation-building that Ecuador experienced in the first decades of the 20th century. Political leaders believed that progress would bring the emerging nation-state into modernity, only to be achieved by cutting ties with the past and bringing progressive ideas from the cities to the countryside. Yet, in almost ironic fashion, in order to build the road—a metaphorical channel between Ecuador’s past and future—the State had to use the *mingas*—a collective Amerindian endeavor that dates back to pre-Columbian times.

The *minga* symbolizes two important aspects of Icaza’s critique of Ecuador’s social climate. First, the goal of political leaders was to have Amerindians actively participate in Ecuador’s move towards modernity by cutting their ties with the pre-Columbian past. The traditional use of the *minga* was a community effort to create something to improve the community. According to Pereira, Amerindians would essentially benefit the future of Ecuador by creating links between Cuchitambo and Quito. The irony leads to Icaza’s second critique: the *minga* was a structure designed to benefit all Amerindians, and yet as the road project progresses, the system becomes a means by which the “three pillars” continue to manipulate and exploit the Amerindians. Such exploitation was, in reality, a mere continuation. Although postcolonial theories did not emerge until decades after the publication of *Huasipungo*, the essence of Icaza’s overall critique is in fact postcolonial.

This leads to a final interpretation of the cover’s sickle image as the Amerindian-led agrarian rebellion at the end of *Huasipungo*. The sickle is a symbol of agriculture and

²⁰⁸ “—Ojalá el patriotismo de ustedes no sea sólo cuestión de copas —dijo, amenazador, don Alfonso Pereira” (126).

peasantry, and in the cover, the Amerindian figures are staring back at the “three pillars” in an apparent defensive pose, sickles ready to pounce. This, of course, alludes to the text’s underlying argument—Amerindians must break free from their subaltern position. And yet, although Icaza’s Amerindians fight against oppressors—Andrés Chiliquinga leads a rebellion against Pereira, killing several of their *mestizo* oppressors in the process—it is evident that the author believed change needed to occur from the top-down, a point on behalf of which José Carlos Mariátegui argued in his *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (1924).²⁰⁹ The indigenous population had no access to formal education, and so they were never the intended audience. Icaza sought to expose Ecuador’s economic reality in order to create change among the ruling élite, thus combating Ecuador’s sociopolitical structure vicariously through the Amerindian rebellion at the end of the novel.

One important element that is obviously missing from *Huasipungo*’s 1934 cover is precisely the novel’s Amerindian protagonist: Andrés Chiliquinga. This is stunning, given that almost every cover since then does include Andrés in some shape or form. This does not suggest that Icaza believed him a less important character, but rather that the novel encompasses more than just its defense of the Amerindian. The focus upon Andrés in later revised editions of the novel do, however, suggest that the Amerindian character’s story impacted readers much more than Icaza had originally expected. This is perhaps most evident in the novel’s numerous 20th-century versions, which focus specifically upon Andrés’ story, and which include both the play *El huasipungo de Andrés Chiliquinga* (1964) and the short film *El cielo para la Cunshi, ¡carajo!* (1975). More

²⁰⁹ Although Icaza never mentioned Mariátegui as a direct influence on his political thought, it can be assumed that the self-described “devorador de libros” was familiar with this essay (Ojeda 114).

recently, in *Memorias de Andrés Chilibuinga* (2013) Andrés' story is reinterpreted by a young Otavaleño Amerindian (also named Andrés Chilibuinga), who has been chosen to keep his ancestors' memory alive. Thus, whether Icaza intended it to or not, his creation did turn eventually into a national myth—a symbol of indigenous exploitation embedded in collective memory—, Andrés the embodiment of generations of Amerindian struggle against oppression. Furthermore, the versions studied here depart from the myth in a more explicit manner than the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, or Hatuey myths.

Versions of the Myth

Ricardo Descalzi's *El huasipungo de Andrés Chilibuinga* (1964) and the Threat of U.S. Imperialism

In February 1964, Ecuadorian playwright and critic Ricardo Descalzi (1912-1990) was approached by a group of teachers from Quito's *Colegio Normal de Mujeres Manuela Cañizares* to create a theatrical version of Icaza's *Huasipungo*. The motivation was to have the play be presented in two different educational institutions, the school for girls and the *Colegio Normal de Varones Juan Montalvo*. Descalzi was a good friend of Icaza's (he had been godfather to Icaza's granddaughter), so he accepted the project, and Icaza remarked he trusted no one else with it. At first, Descalzi called the play *Huasipungo* but later changed the print version to *El huasipungo de Andrés Chilibuinga*. It consists of six acts which, with the exception of few artistic allowances, follow the novel faithfully. Dialogue, however, was almost completely original, with a single exception: Andrés Chilibuinga's monologue after Cunshi's death. In order to recreate Icaza's rendering of this emotional scene, Descalzi noted that he combined the Amerindian's speech in the original novel and his own experiences in the Andean

providence of Cotopaxi. Given the play's structure, it was impossible to include all of the novel's original elements. Descalzi had to perform a digested reading of the text in order to pick, choose, and combine elements he deemed essential to the myth. Although the basic theme of Icaza's novel remained intact—Don Alfonso exploits Andrés Chilibuina through the road project—Chilibuina's fight against corruption is now projected onto an international plane: towards U.S. imperialism in Latin America.

In 1964, U.S. tensions with Latin America were high. The 1959 Cuban Revolution and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis had caused an increased preoccupation over U.S. actions. Ecuadorian President Otto Arosemena's administration (1961-3) maintained diplomatic relations with Cuba, yet his alliance with the Ecuadorian Communist party resulted in a 1962 military rebellion. A second 1963 coup led to a four-man military junta whose political ambition focused on halting the emergence of communist ideas among the lower classes. Their plan was to use agrarian reform to appease this long-suffering population, and an Agrarian Reform Law, abolishing the *huasipungo* system, was passed in July 1964.

In 1947, Descalzi himself had become a member of the populist *Concentración de Fuerzas Populares* (CFP), a strong political party from the 1950s to the 1980s. This often radical party, which some opponents went so far as to label "Nazi-fascist," engaged in successful (and foiled) coups over the course of several decades. They viewed democracy as "mass mobilization and the occupation of public space rather than as respect for procedures and the rule of law" (de la Torre 12). The CFP was widely viewed as a constant threat to the political party in power, reason enough, perhaps, for the military junta to ban Descalzi's play from being performed barely eight days before its premiere.

Descalzi's play was undoubtedly a discourse on the threat of a U.S. invasion. Thus the six acts are essentially six mini-productions: each has its own set design, its own voice—presumably offstage, though not indicated—that puts the audience up to speed in the action before it begins, and a curtain is drawn at the end of each act. The decision to include so many sets was likely homage to the novel's imagery technique. And yet, the set design was also a way to draw the audience into the familiar world of Cuchitambo. The influence of Greek tragedy is also noticeable in the play's voice technique and the use of a chorus, thus mimicking the chorus-like quality of the Amerindian masses in Icaza's novel, who serve as backdrop for the main action. The following, in which the Amerindians, dying of hunger, plead with Pereira to feed their children, is one such example from the novel:

Rápidamente aquello se volvió un clamor de amenaza, caótico, rebelde, en donde surgían y naufragaban diversos gritos:

—¡Socorrus, taiticu!

—¡Siempre hemus recibidu!

—¡Siempreee!

—¡Guagua, también...!

—¡Guarmi, también...!

—Socorrus de maicitu para tostadu.

—Socorrus de cebadita para mazamurra.

—Socorrus de papitas para fiesta.

—¡Socorruuus! (195)

Although Icaza was critiqued for lacking character development, it is hardly surprising that, given his theatrical background, he chose this dramatic technique to portray the Amerindian's anonymity.²¹⁰ In Descalzi's version, the Amerindian remains, for the most part, anonymous as well. With the exception of Andrés and Cunshi and two additional minor characters,²¹¹ the Amerindians also function as a chorus. The same scene from Icaza's novel is portrayed in the theatrical version:

PATRON. —¿Más caridad de la que les hago todos los días,
aguantándoles?

INDIO 2. —Succurritus, amu sumercé.

INDIO 1. —Muriendu de hambre pubre natural.

INDIO 3. —Siempre misu dierun pes sumercé.

PATRON. —Esta es una costumbre salvaje.

INDIO 1. —Guagua también.

INDIO 2. —Guarmi tan.

INDIO 1. —Succurrus de maicitu para tustaditu.

INDIO 2. —Succurru de papitas para fiesta tan.

TODOS. —Succurrus amu Patrún. (63)

Icaza's own focus upon speech—language—also aided the theatrical version. A play's structure forces a message to reach the audience in a great measure audibly, and

²¹⁰ After the death of his mother in 1926, Icaza left the medical field in order to study dramatic arts at the National Conservatory, where he began acting. In 1929, Icaza wrote his first play, *La comedia sin nombre*, which took on the upper classes' corruption, and showed the clash between the two classes: "la virtud, simbolizada en el campesino, y la perversión de la clase dominante" (Flores Jaramillo 21). Two years after publishing *Huasipungo*, Icaza published his last theater piece, *Flagelo* (1936), an experimental conglomeration of symbols that present the Amerindian's marginalized life.

²¹¹ Carmen is a young Amerindian woman who works at Don Alfonso's hacienda. She has only three lines, in which she avoids the Mayordomo's sexual advances (62). The other character is Tomasa, an elderly Amerindian medicine woman, who attempts to cure Cunshi after receives food poisoning (73-5).

Descalzi's work definitely exaggerates Icaza's portrayal of indigenous speech. Phonetic exaggeration was done undoubtedly to help the performance. Yet, depending on the audience (children, for instance), this could potentially create a comic effect. It also created distance between the audience and the Amerindian characters, portraying them as exotic beings, much as the novel does. All of these theatrical elements—scenery, indigenous chorus, Amerindian's speech, the novel's original characters—were of course familiar to the viewers. The novel's popularity meant that the typical Ecuadorian viewer had knowledge of the story that was to unfold, and familiar elements were juxtaposed with Descalzi's version in order to emphasize the importance of the Andrés Chilingua myth in Ecuadorian culture.

To begin with, while Descalzi's play pays homage to his friend Icaza's original work, this version does depart from the original in two respects: 1) Doña Blanca's and the American's exploitation of the Amerindian form the narrative which, subsequently, converts Alfonso Pereira into a parody of himself; and 2) elimination of evidence of Church corruption. As a result, Andrés becomes for the first time the sole focus of narrative action.

To begin with, in Act II where the "three pillars" meet, Descalzi breaks the myth's power structure. Here, Descalzi introduces one important change: there is no evident power structure. In the novel, Pereira holds all the power in Cuchitambo and delegates tasks to the priest, the police chief (Jacinto), and his *mestizo* foremen. As highlighted previously, this scene shows the power hierarchy clearly, as Jacinto attempts (unsuccessfully) to engage in conversation with Pereira. And yet, in Descalzi's version this is seemingly reversed:

PATRON. —¿Y cómo les va por aquí?

RUPERTO. —Así viviendo no mas patrón.

PATRON. —¿Cómo van las multas?

RUPERTO. —Hasta eso escasea.

PATRON. —¿Y las huambritas?

RUPERTO. —Ni eso. (35)

Pereira and Ruperto (Jacinto in the novel) engage in casual conversation until the priest arrives, with Pereira asking questions about the townspeople. Although this technique is used to provide the audience more information and to demonstrate familiarity among characters, it diminishes Pereira's seemingly overbearing power over the other characters. This power structure declines further throughout the play. In Act III, Pereira attempts at a dominant stance when the (American) Engineer arrives to check on the project, yet by Act IV is overcome with fear of an Amerindian uprising. This begins with the shift in power structure, which first occurs in Act I. Doña Blanca, who in the novel appears only briefly, in the theatrical version goes from secondary to primary character. In the scene below, for example, Doña Blanca (Ama) reaches Andrés and Cunshi's *huasipungo* with Don Alfonso (Patrón) in order to find a wet nurse for their bastard grandson:

AMA. —Si no vienen, yo no sé qué les hago a estas indias
facinerosas, después del trabajo que me he dado de subir a
este desamparo.

PATRON. —Ya, ya, todo se ha de arreglar.

AMA. —Si no fuera porque le he llegado a querer al guagua como si fuera hijo mío.

PATRON. —(Furioso) Hijo de un cholo miserable, de un longo civilizado.

AMA. —(Mirando al cielo) ¿Por qué permitiste esta desgracia Diosito mío? La guagua inocente caer en manos de este verdugo, de ese facineroso. (Pausa) A nadie he hecho pes mal Dios mío, a nadie he hecho pes mal... (Se santigua)
(23)

Doña Blanca assumes a more dominant position towards her daughter's predicament. In the novel, she is portrayed as a typical *quiteña* primarily through Pereira's eyes: "Lo que ansiaba en realidad doña Blanca era volver a la ciudad, volver a la chismografía de sus amigas encopetadas—mafia de un cholerío presuntuoso y rapaz—, volver a las novenas de la Virgen de Pompeya, volver a las joyas, volver al padre Uzcátegui. Y así se hizo (121)." All throughout, Doña Blanca is concerned with only one thing: covering up the birth of her daughter's bastard son. At no time does she speak down to or act out against any other character—that job is left to her husband. In fact, she even shows a maternal instinct for the child, despite the fact that he is *mestizo*. In the theatrical version, however, Doña Blanca is cruel and overbearing. She extends her resentment for the *mestizo* class onto the active indigenous population:

AMA. —Indios hay lo que quiera en la hacienda, ¿irás pues a pagarles por eso?

PATRON. —¿Crees que van a trabajar en el pantano? Ellos conocen bien eso. Hay que ofrecerles plata, el indio es mal enseñado.

AMA. —Vos que les vas a enseñar a mal a estos indios ociosos. Yo por mí, a fueite les mandara. ¿No es tuya la hacienda? ¿No son tuyos los indios? O la hacienda es de los verdugos...
(24)

She also lacks any kind of maternal instinct:

AMA. —Pero felizmente nadie sabrá nada. Todo salió bien gracias a Dios.

PATRON. —¿Y la afrenta?

AMA. —Nadie se ha enterrado. (Santiguándose) Dios me libre que mis amigas lleguen ni siguiera a sospechar. No tendría donde enterrarme de vergüenza. Cuando ya sea grandecito le hemos de hacer pasar por hijo de cualquiera de las cholas de la hacienda hasta que crezca y poder mandarle a los Estados Unidos o a Europa a que se haga doctor. (24)

Doña Blanca's role, then, is to draw attention away from Pereira.²¹² Much of what she says is what Pereira either thinks or verbalizes in the novel; splitting power and cruelty among several characters also reduces the overall blame. Yet another departure in this version is the absence of Church corruption. The priest appears only in Act II and

²¹² Doña Blanca's more dominant role can be interpreted in several ways. The women in Icaza's novel are all minor characters, including Cunshi, and represent the female's subordinate role in 1930's Quito. Giving Doña Blanca a stronger role would reflect the female's stronger role in society. It could also be a direct critique of the upper-class female, one that Icaza did not focus upon. Descalzi also changed the scene when Cunshi is dying to include a female medicine woman (Tomasita). Andrés does not get help in the novel, but he does go to a medicine man when he injures his foot (115).

does not actively participate in the plan to build the road with a *minga*. In fact, with the exception of the priest saluting his glass over the money the church will receive, the critique of the Catholic Church is absent. In his version, Descalzi even went so far as to change the ending of the “three pillars” scene so that the priest goes to confession, instead of sleeping with Juana, the *mestiza* barkeep with whom, in Icaza’s version, he and Pereira have sex.

All of these changes demonstrate Descalzi’s critique of the Chiliquinga myth’s power structure. As emphasized in the play, the actual real exploiters of Ecuadorian Amerindians are the American engineers who, like colonial Spaniards, have penetrated Ecuador and corrupted the economy. Indeed, “*gringos*” (Americans) are mentioned all throughout Icaza’s novel, yet they never rise to a real presence and only turn up briefly towards the end, after Andrés has been whipped at the post for stealing a cow to pay for Cunshi’s Christian burial.²¹³ From the outset then Descalzi sets up Americans as exploiters. The “Voz” at the beginning of Act I provides the back story:

²¹³ Encaramados en una tapia, don Alfonso, Mr. Chapy y dos gringos más, planearon—en amena conversación—sobre la vasta extensión de la sierra el croquis para sus grandes proyectos. —Lo del río está bueno. Gran trabajo. Allí pondremos nuestras casas, nuestras oficinas — anunció uno de los extranjeros.
 —Well... Well... —dijo el otro.
 —El cartero no es malo tampoco.
 —Lo que yo ofrezco cumplo —advirtió don Alfonso, lleno de orgullo.
 —Así se puede tratar.
 —He tenido que meter mucho pulso, mucho ingenio, mucho dinero.
 —¡Oh! Magnífico, amigo.
 —Gracias.
 —Pero... Mire... En esa loma nosotros pondremos el aserradero grande. La queremos limpia... Sólo eso falta... —anunció Mr. Chapy, señalando la ladera donde se amontonaban los huasipungos improvisados de los indios desplazados de la orilla del río y donde también se hallaba la choza de Chiliquinga.
 —¡Ah! Eso... —murmuró don Alfonso en tono de duda que parecía afirmar: “No me ha comprometido a tanto”.
 —No es mucho. La mayor parte... —Está realizada.
 —Yes. Pero... también eso.
 —Se hará —concluyó un poco molesto el hacendado. Luego, desviando el tema de la plática, dijo—: A este lado tenemos, como ustedes podrán ver, bosques para un siglo. Maderas...

Las deudas pesan abrumadoras sobre el patrón de Cuchitambo, que abandonando su hacienda hace una vida de lujo y despilfarro en la ciudad. Pero ahora, en vista de un negocio de madera que se le presenta con una Compañía Americana, decide entrar a su latifundio que no conoce linderos, en compañía de su esposa y su hija. (Pausa). El negocio que va a realizar es de primera, pero los gringos le exigen la construcción de un carretero hacia los bosques. Además le exigen las tierras de los huasipungos, para construir en ellas sus viviendas. (Pausa). (14)

Americans here are portrayed as demanding, taking whatever happens to be in their path for economic gain. Pereira, on the other hand, is presented as someone in a bad predicament: he happens to be broke. Only later does the voice reveal, if an afterthought, that his daughter is pregnant out of wedlock (15). The beginning sets the tone for the rest of the work. The novel begins with Pereira preoccupied over his daughter's pregnancy and his growing debts. When his uncle suggests the road project, he mentions the Americans, but only in passing, Icaza's target being the white Creole élites (61-7). The play's design, however, has another villain in mind: the U.S.

Although Pereira claims that he has spent much time and money, the Americans control the road project's finances and force him to clear out the *huasipungos*. The foreigners' power, along with the prospect of economic gain, forces him to agree to the

—Eso es otra cosa. Nosotros vamos por otro camino. ¿No ha leído usted que la cordillera oriental de estos Andes está llena de petróleo? Usted y su tío tendrán buena parte en el negocio.

—Sí. Claro...

—Lo de la madera es sólo para principiar... Para que no molesten...

—¡Ah! Eso, no. Aquí ustedes están seguros. Nadie se atreverá a molestarlos. ¿Quién? ¿Quién puede ser capaz? Ustedes... Ustedes han traído la civilización. ¿Qué más quieren estos indios? —chilló Pereira, dando una patada en el pedestal de tierra que le sostenía. Pero como la tapia era vieja se desmoronó sin soportar aquel alarde de fuerza y el terrateniente, entre nubes de polvo, dio con su humanidad en el suelo.

—¿Ve? ¿Ve usted cómo no sabemos dónde pisamos? (233-4)

displacement, and this power shift upsets him. But, Icaza's novel critiques primarily the white elite, not the American. Therefore the Americans' economic hunger and general apathy for the Amerindians' *huasipungos* is overshadowed by Pereira and the *cholos*' cruelty and hypocrisy. In the theatrical version of this scene, however, the entire issue becomes inverted: an even stronger critique of the American appears on several levels.²¹⁴

Descalzi's representation of the American's speech is satirical, almost comical, as opposed to Icaza's, where Americans speak Spanish fluently with only occasional insertions of English words. The novel mirrors a perception of the white foreigner as dominant and educated: he has mastered two languages; Descalzi's play, however, shows *gringos* speaking with numerous grammatical errors, most notably in their nonexistent verb conjugation, giving the impression that they are uneducated. Second, the highlighted scene suggests that Americans are much crueler in their dealings with Amerindians. They allude nonchalantly to the unimportance of the Amerindian's life—an allusion, perhaps, to the mass genocide of the Native American population during U.S. colonization—when they say, “Nosotros a indios matar a que no molesten” (81). Furthermore, they witness Andrés beaten at the post, and yet do not seem affected by such violence as they continue conversing. Lastly, whereas Icaza critiqued subtly the “civilization” brought by

²¹⁴ PATRON. —(Entra seguido de un gringo) ¿Lo agarraste?
 ANDRES. —Pirduná patruncitú... pirduná...
 GRINGO. —¿Qué hacer a este hombre?
 PATRON. —Voy a escarmentarle míster. Amárrenle a ese árbol. Sáquenle el poncho.
 GRINGO. —(Mirando el panorama) Bella vista, llamaremos esto Bella Vista.
 (Mientras los huasicamas desnudan y atan a Andrés, sigue la conversación).
 PATRON. —Lo que yo ofrezco cumplo. Convenimos en el carretero y el carretero está listo. Piden estas tierras, pues las tierras estarán listas.
 GRINGO. —¿Y usted no pensar que indios?
 PATRON. —Los indios hacen lo que yo ordeno porque son míos, me pertenecen. Los heredé con la hacienda y son parte de ella. Soy yo el patrón y al patrón se le obedece ciegamente. Ya va a ver usted con sus propios ojos. Comienza Policarpio.
 GRINGO. —Nosotros a indios matar a que no molesten.
 PATRON. —Bueno...aquí somos un poquito más civilizados. (81)

foreigners, Descalzi criticizes directly when Pereira claims that they, in fact, are less civilized than Ecuadorian landowners. The preceding events carry constant references to the *gringos* until they finally appear to claim their land. The property they seek, however, is not just any Amerindian's; they claim Andrés Chiliquinga's *huasipungo*. Thus, as in versions of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, this civilization/barbarity dichotomy becomes deconstructed as we see the "civilized" parties are, in fact, the barbaric ones.

Descalzi's version departs completely from Icaza's by placing Andrés Chiliquinga's story at the center of dramatic action. This, subsequently, influenced the later versions discussed here. From the beginning of Act I, the "Voz" first introduces Andrés and Cunshi, mentioning that they have a child who is still nursing—important information for the first scene with Doña Blanca. The dramatic action begins at their *huasipungo*: Andrés calls for Cunshi and then violently drags her to the hut. The scene is based on the one in the novel where Andrés abuses Cunshi both physically and sexually (79-83). Policarpio and the Mayordomo then enter stage and force Andrés to work on the road project. The scene ends violently and Cunshi watches tearfully as he leaves (13-20). As in the novel then, this first scene becomes pivotal to Andrés' character development. Andrés has a character flaw—he abuses Cunshi—but over the course of his story he sees the error of his ways. His personal growth is juxtaposed with tragic loss, the result of his fatal decision to steal the bull meat. Having lost Cunshi to Pereira, who uses her as his grandson's wet nurse, Andrés realizes his love for her, fights to get her back, only to have her die in the end.

The next scene also takes place at Andrés' *huasipungo*. Doña Blanca is searching for an Amerindian wet nurse and immediately chooses Cunshi—yet another difference

from the novel. This scene also sets up the story's underlying conflict: Americans's claim of Chiliquinga's *huasipungo*:

PATRON. —De estos terrenos están aficionados los gringos. Son medio shunshos, ¿para qué dizque quieren esta loma reseca?

AMA. —Ellos sabrán para que, a vos que te importa, con tal que te paguen...

PATRON. —Son huasipungos...

AMA. —¿Y a vos qu[é]? ¿Acaso no eres el patrón? ¿No eres el dueño de la hacienda?

PATRON. —(Mirando la choza y dirigiéndose al indio) ¿De quién es este huasipungo?

INDIO. —De Andrés Chiliquinga is pis amu patrún.

PATRON. —(Mirando al valle) Será por la vista. (22-3)

The Americans are interested in taking Andrés' specific land, not just any *huasipungo*. Such is the conflict that will be resolved at the end. In the final scene of Act I, Andrés returns home to an empty hut and desperately looks for Cunshi. This is a different Andrés—not violent towards Cunshi but displaying a deep love for her (29-30).

Act II is devoted entirely to the “three pillars” meeting, but Act III returns Andrés to focal point. The latter takes place at the road project, where Andrés becomes ill. Tuerto Rodríguez, the foreman, ties him to a tree and begins beating the sickness out of him (50-1). While this scene occurs in the novel, the sick Amerindian there is not Andrés (152-6). Descalzi most likely made this change in order to focus upon Andrés, who remains in the spotlight for the rest of the play. In Act IV, he comes to rescue Cunshi from Pereira's

hacienda—yet another addition (67-70). In Act V, as Cunshi dies from food poisoning, Andrés delivers an emotional monologue, the play's climax where the audience sees that Andrés has completely evolved (76-7). The scene was crucial to Icaza, and perhaps that is why it is the only monologue retained from the original novel (218-9). In a 1971 interview, Icaza himself reflected on the impact of this particular scene:

En *Huasipungo* hay una pequeña parte, la del llanto del Andrés por la muerte de la Cunshi. En ese pequeño trozo se halla reflejada la emoción nacional en su parte más regional, más provinciana: cómo es el indio frente a la muerte y al terror. Al copiar de la realidad esa expresión, elevándola a la categoría artística, se ha logrado que no sólo sea entendida en todas las latitudes del mundo, sino que también quienes la han oído la han sentido emocionalmente. Concretando el caso: cuando yo o algún conferenciante recitaba esa parte, la gente en Moscú, París, en Italia, Argentina, los Estados Unidos o el Ecuador, siente una emoción especial que se traduce, muchas veces, en aplausos o en lágrimas. (Mantilla Garzón 41)

This is, indeed, a critical scene for the dramatic action. Up to this point the audience may not have connected with Andrés due to the barrier between audience and Amerindian characters. As Icaza mentioned above, death, a universal theme, could break boundaries and connect seemingly un-relatable parties. Thus, the actor portraying Andrés has the difficult task of striking emotion in the viewer. Heightened connection is required in order to involve the audience in the final act, the culmination of the falling action and resolution. In the final scenes, Andrés convinces the other Amerindians to stay and fight

for their land: “(Incorporándose con esfuerzo) Nu hay que ir. Quidemus en tierra de husipungo. Nuestru es huasipungo. Taiticus dejarun a nusutrus. (Hay un silencio de estupor)” (87). With the audience now involved in the story, Andrés’ speech is not just meant for the Cuchitambo Amerindians, but for the viewer as well. Just as Andrés fought for his land, contemporary Ecuadorians, too, need to fight the U.S. threat.

A Threat from Within: Gustavo Guayasamín’s *El cielo para la Cunshi, ¡carajo!* (1975)

A second version of the Andrés Chilibinga myth was produced in Ecuadorian filmmaker Gustavo Guayasamín’s 1975 short *El cielo para la Cunshi, ¡carajo!*, a 15-minute black-and-white silent film that recreates the episode of Icaza’s *Huasipungo* in which Chilibinga steals a cow in order to pay for Cunshi’s burial. As in Descalzi’s play, Andrés’ story here was disseminated visually as a collective experience with the capability of reaching wider audiences. The film’s focus differs, however. Whereas Descalzi eliminated national corruption in order to focus upon foreign exploitation, Guayasamín returns to a national critique of the “three pillars,” particularly the Church’s corruption. Guayasamín’s exact motivations for his film are unclear. It can be assumed, however, that Ecuador’s political climate during its filming, especially in regard to agrarian reform, was reason enough to treat the topic of Amerindian exploitation. During its filming in 1975, Ecuador was under the military dictatorship of Guillermo Rodríguez Lara, who had led a 1972 coup that ended in President José María Velasco’s exile to Argentina. Unlike the 1960’s military junta, Rodríguez Lara planned his regime to be long-term; he would create economic opportunities, beginning with the nationalization of the country’s oil industry. Soon his regime proved to have less interest in agrarian reform

than the previous junta did, and instead focused all of its efforts upon nationalist campaigns to regain control of Ecuador's oil. It was also far to the left, as it sought to strengthen the 1964 agrarian reform law by declaring large land acquisitions illegal and promoting redistribution, especially to Amerindian communities. And yet, the regime's campaign to end the continued marginalization of indigenous groups did not lead to real integration of the economic sphere. Although it did promise meaningful agrarian reform, the opposition by élites stifled change, and after four years in power only one percent of land had actually changed hands. There was virtually no improvement to Amerindian marginalization. Thus, the root of Ecuador's sociopolitical problems was no longer the outsider. As in Icaza's novel, it lay within.

Guayasamín's film begins with a wide shot of the church. The camera goes out of focus and then back into. Its image is grainy, as if it were a relic only recently recovered. The next shot is of a small, white dog that scurries to the church's front doors, its back legs mangled, and it drags the back half of its body pathetically as it moves. The camera follows the dog as it reaches the church door. A priest rushes out suddenly in order to shoo it away, and as it runs off the priest picks up a rock and throws it at the animal. At this moment, an Amerindian enters to the back right of the frame, also hobbling towards the church. As he passes the dog, they turn briefly to look at each other before continuing in opposite directions. As soon as the Amerindian reaches the church's doors, the frame switches to the text: "Andrés Chilibingua, un huasipunguero, pide sepultura cristiana para su mujer, La Cunshi" (01:17).

The film's first sequence introduces the theme of exploitation developed throughout. To begin with, he references Icaza's own animalization of Amerindian

characters in *Huasipungo*. In the novel, the dog is not in this first scene; here it is used in order to draw a clear parallel between man and animal. Both the decrepit-looking, shoeless Chiliquinga and the mangled dog hobble towards the church for similar reasons: the dog searches for the priest's help in order to ensure his survival, while Chiliquinga searches for his help in order to ensure his wife's proper burial—survival in the afterlife. The similarities between the two show that both man and animal have been beaten down by years of poverty and abuse, a connection further heightened by the exchange between the two, as one species leaves the church and the other enters, one wishing the other better luck. As the viewer later learns, Andrés' journey ends in much the same violent manner as the dog's, tied to a post and whipped in front of a crowd.

The film focuses entirely upon the abuse to which Andrés falls victim after Cunshi's death. Guayasamín no doubt decided to use this scene from *Huasipungo* because it includes episodes of the “three pillars” corruption. First, corruption in the Church as the priest explains that paying more money to bury Cunshi closer to church grounds will ensure her reaching heaven faster. Andrés hangs upon the priest's every word, his power over the Amerindian evident down to each character's posture: while the priest walks upright, Andrés crouches and hobbles behind him. Next, Pereira's and police corruption as Chiliquinga is beaten instead of tried. Like a slaughtered animal, Andrés is hung. With every slash, the camera alternates between a close-up shot of his agonized face and a pan of the Amerindian crowd. The focus upon Andrés's suffering is heightened in the film's final moments with a close-up shot of the protagonist's face as he clutches his son in pain. During his beating, his son, too, received lashes from Pereira. The contrast of light and dark—the complete blackness of the hut's interior juxtaposed to

a strong light shining on their faces—illuminates Andrés’ and his son’s distressed faces, a technique used to portray a stronger emotion to the audience.

One of the most interesting elements of this version that departs from Icaza’s and Descalzi’s versions is the absence of Amerindian speech, arguably the most important element of Icaza’s original novel. Not only is it a silent film—none of the characters speak on camera—but there is no music, either. The film’s total silence suggests several things. On the one hand, using black-and-white film enhances a vintage feeling. Early 20th-century silent films almost always included some sort of music, so Guayasamín could well have chosen something indigenous to Ecuador, such as a vintage *pasillo*, or an Amerindian melody. One interpretation is that Guayasamín wanted the viewer’s entire focus without distraction on the picture. (Another is that, perhaps, he did not have enough funding to include any audio.) A more profound one is that Guayasamín’s decision to create total silence signals the film’s relation to the Amerindian’s stripped voice. The fact that the film is black-and-white and silent creates distance in ways similar to the effects of the exotic elements in Icaza’s and Descalzi’s pieces. In 1975, silent films would have created a vintage feeling, as if it were a legend in an Ecuadorian archive. In addition, Guayasamín’s film presupposes a text and begins *in medias res*. Unless the audience had seen a theatrical production of the work, it would be the first time they would have “witnessed” firsthand Andrés’ tragic story. Yet, despite the familiarity with Andrés’ world, the film’s silence does create a barrier: they are able to view Chiliquinga’s world, but unable to enter it fully. This is precisely Andrés’ predicament at the beginning of the film. His partner is dead and, as the audience knows from before, the cause being the rotten bull meat he stole. The priest’s attitude towards her burial shows that, even in

death, Cunshi continues to be exploited. Andrés desperately wishes to atone for his error by ensuring her soul reaches Heaven, and yet he cannot afford to bury her near the church. Therefore, she, too, is metaphorically blocked from entering the other realm. Heaven, here, can be interpreted as a metaphor for a progressive state. The political climate during the filming of this production proved, then, that the Amerindian was no closer to getting out of his subaltern position than when Icaza published *Huasipungo*. This would explain the absence of the novel's most important scene: the Amerindian rebellion led by Andrés Chilibuina. Instead, it begins and ends with a beaten down Andrés who, instead of standing up against oppression, becomes resigned to it. This version of Andrés, like the others, is a victim.

As in the case of Descalzi's play, Guayasamín's film uses the Andrés Chilibuina myth in order to address contemporary themes that were relevant to Ecuadorian society. Furthermore, the narrative focuses solely upon Andrés. It had been at least a decade since the *huasipungo* system had been abolished, which is perhaps why Guayasamín chose to omit all references to it. On the one hand, it is possible that in his film Guayasamín saw the bourgeoisie's corruption in the agrarian reform merely as continuing the colonial system. Thus, he chose to critique the historic corrupt "pillars" that have marginalized the indigenous population. On the other hand, Guayasamín was indeed pessimistic about Ecuador's escape from colonialism, as made evident by the presence of Andrés's son in the film's final sequence. In art, children are often used to signal the future. Thus, the final scene shows Andrés and his son, both injured and consoling each other. Parents protect their children, but Andrés is unable to protect his son from succumbing to the same violence. Indeed, Guayasamín suggests, perhaps, that Rodríguez Lara's regime

would do no better at ending Amerindian marginalization. His prediction turned out to be true.

Postcolonial Hauntings: Carlos Arcos Cabrera's *Memorias de Andrés Chilingua* (2013)

The most recent version of the Andrés Chilingua myth is in Carlos Arcos Cabrera's novel *Memorias de Andrés Chilingua* (2013). Written in first person, it deals with a young musician from Otavalo, Ecuador named "Andrés Chilingua" who in the summer of 2000 is invited to Columbia University as a representative of CONAIE (*Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador*). Andrés is there to represent his native Otavalan culture and is required to dress in traditional clothing. He must also take one class at the university and chooses a literature course at random. As the reader soon discovers, however, it is no coincidence that the young musician has chosen this path: he immediately befriends María Clara Pereira, a classmate and fellow-Ecuadorian.

Liz, the course director, urges Andrés to read *Huasipungo*, given his *tocayo*, whereupon Andrés laments that he has never been interested in reading since he has dedicated his entire life to music. Also, he happens not to be familiar with Icaza's work. "La Liz" insists that it is important for an Amerindian to be familiar with the *mestizo*'s novel: "El punto es saber cómo miras la manera en que un autor mestizo los describió a ustedes. Especialmente tú, que eres dirigente de la CONAIE, del movimiento indígena más importante de América Latina y que, por lo que sé, ha cambiado la historia del Ecuador" (37). María Clara herself offers to help him work through the reading. Because he has been invited to the university and is not an enrolled student, the project's sole purpose is for him to offer an opinion of the book from an indigenous perspective.

The most salient feature of Arcos Cabrera's novel is its *mise en abyme*, the "text within a text." As Andrés delves further into *Huasipungo*, he does not comprehend that the novel, though an attempt to present Ecuadorian reality during that time period, is actually fiction. As the Amerindians in the novel suffer, so too does Andrés. Furthermore, Andrés is convinced that he and María Clara are actually descendants of Icaza's Andrés Chiliquinga and Don Alfonso Pereira. Thus as he and María Clara's friendship turns amorous, he not only views their sexual union as a reconciliation between the two families, but between the two races: the *mishus*—or *mestizos*—and the *indios*.

The realism of *Memorias de Andrés Chiliquinga*, including the mention of familiar streets and districts in New York City, is juxtaposed to scenes of magical realism, where the ghost of Icaza's Amerindian protagonist visits the young Otavalan on three separate occasions. Andrés admits to his *tocayo*'s ghost that he has no previous knowledge of Icaza's novel. In fact, the more time he spends with María Clara, the more he comments on how this young *mishu*, who has spent the majority of her life in the U.S., knows more about his own country than he does. This is due to the fact that many Otavalans, including Andrés, spend half the year travelling outside of Ecuador to sell crafts or perform music from their community. Furthermore, he admits that he never learned to speak Quichua, the autochthonous tongue, because he was forbidden to use it in school. Yet, the "disconnect" Andrés feels towards his country and culture is seemingly bridged by his *tocayo*'s ghost.

The three visits of Icaza's Andrés Chiliquinga echo the three ghosts of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (1843); each visit represents the past, present and future of the indigenous population. The first visit occurs almost halfway through the novel, after

Andrés completes his first summary of *Huasipungo*. His *tocayo*'s ghost begins by telling Andrés that he has been waiting a long time for this visit: "No te asustarás..., porque yo me he de asustar más y no te he de volver a visitar. Hace rato que te vengo siguiendo, a veces soñándote, a veces mirándote de lejos nomás..., pero no se ha dado la oportunidad, sino recién ahora" (92). He then recounts his memories of Carnival in Cuchitambo, painting a picture of indigenous dance and belief filled with great joy and then sadness as *Taita Carnaval*, an allegory of life, comes and goes. The episode ends with Andrés playing traditional Carnival songs on the guitar while his *tocayo* sings along. The second visit occurs after Andrés spends his first night with María Clara. The violence of the sexual encounter recalls the first scene in *Huasipungo*, where Andrés Chiliquinga violently attacks Cunshi before they make love. After reading this scene, Andrés berates Icaza for portraying the Amerindians as animal-like. And yet, as he sneaks out of María Clara's room, he notes: "en el espejo cerca de la puerta me miré, y ya no vi mi cara, sino la de mi tocayo Andrés Chiliquinga" (148). In this shorter visit, the ghost pokes fun at Andrés' rendezvous with a Pereira and ends by having Andrés play *yaravíes* (*yarabi* en Quichua)—indigenous songs with a melancholy tone—because they remind the ghost of his own rendezvous with Cunshi. From this point on, Andrés feels a union with his *tocayo* and his reading of Icaza's novel becomes personal. His summaries of the text recount the story as if it were happening to him, deepening his criticism of Icaza's lack of understanding of the indigenous culture: "El Icaza no sabía cómo somos" (154).

By the time Andrés Chiliquinga's ghost makes his third and final visit in the last few pages, Andrés believes that his *tocayo* and he are now one. The ghost returns to the story of *Taita Carnaval* and the hope that it brings to his people every year: "A nosotros

nos conquistaron, pero sobrevivimos y Taita Carnaval viene cada año ¡Está vivo! Ésa es mi fuerza...” (211). This signal to the future return of the indigenous god leads the ghost to urge Andrés to keep his memory alive for future generations by writing down his experience in New York that summer: “Eres joven y yo viejo, bien viejo. Escribe lo que viviste, a eso se le llama memorias, y no importa que digan que eso sólo escriben los viejos. Serán las memorias tuyas y mías, las memorias de Andrés Chiliquinga. Hasta al mishu Icaza le va a dar gusto leerlas. Si tienes todo, hasta grabaste las clases. ¿No te acuerdas?” (211). Here, Chiliquinga’s ghost refers to creating an archive through the written word, much like Icaza’s intention once was to preserve indigenous culture by writing *Huasipungo*.

One important aspect of this version of the myth is Arcos Cabrera’s outright critique through the lens of the Amerindian’s contemporary counterpart and the myth’s “haunting.” Any appearance of a ghost in a text or film suggests a spectral interpretation, and here Andrés Chiliquinga functions as a specifically postcolonial specter. His apparition reminds audiences of the colonial structures that marginalized Amerindians during the 1930s and that continue to affect the contemporary indigenous population. Ghosts return because they have unfinished business—debts to collect. Apparitions only cease once the debt has been settled. In other words, until the indigenous population ceases to be marginalized, this specter must return in order to remind Andrés of the wrongdoings against his ancestors. In turn, Andrés must be the one to “exorcise” this “haunting” by succeeding where his *tocayo* failed. By the end of the novel, the contemporary Andrés has been seemingly possessed by his *tocayo*’s spirit. María Clara herself reminds him constantly that *Huasipungo* is fiction. Although Andrés states that

Icaza portrayed his ancestors incorrectly, his strong connection to the text indicates otherwise. The specter's presence thus creates a bridge between spaces, past and present, life and the afterlife, and creates an uncanny situation, familiar yet unfamiliar. Freud's *uncanny*, as we know, names the unconscious manifestation of impulses normally suppressed by the super-ego due to the fear of a "symbolic castration" by going against cultural norms. Thus, issues and events are often portrayed as threats, such as monsters or ghosts that also serve as scapegoats. Objects and individuals that are familiar can suddenly seem unfamiliar to create an uncanny sense, which Arcos Cabrera's novel achieves when Andrés Chilibringa's ghost interrupts the otherwise realistic tale. Andrés' subsequent acceptance of the ghost's presence as a natural phenomenon—an everyday occurrence, which ought not to be feared—further heightens the uncanny of these nightly encounters. Were these visits to take place in Andrés' dreams, that would be explainable to the reader. Apparitions, though occurring at night, take place when Andrés is seemingly awake.

Andrés Chilibringa's ghost creates a bridge between contemporary Andrés and the cultural heritage from which he feels disconnected. And yet, this bridge is more than just a personal endeavor. Andrés must dress in traditional clothing while in New York, but this is just a mask. His disconnection to Otavaleño traditions is the result of what Icaza himself had feared: the move towards modernity would alternate, that is, the memory of America's indigenous past. Therefore, his *tocayo*'s ghost returns not only to help Andrés with his personal journey, but to keep alive Ecuador's indigenous cultural heritage. Only at the end of the novel has the debt been collected because Andrés has written down his experience for future generations.

And yet, Andrés Chiliquinga's ghost is not a "haunting," in the traditional gothic sense of the word. Although the situation depicted is uncanny, the ghost's presence does not strike fear into either the protagonist's mind or the reader's. Yet, whenever a ghost recurs, whether maliciously or complacently, it raises what such repetition means. Apart from the debt the ghost must collect, Andrés Chiliquinga's ghost also happens to be a reminder of the continuing struggle of the indigenous population, stretching as it does from colonial to contemporary times. The name Andrés Chiliquinga itself is synonymous with the pain and suffering historically endured by Amerindians. The silver lining, it would seem, is that this ghost is complacent rather than wrathful, as if peace has finally been found in the afterlife. Yet, as Andrés discusses with Liz and her husband, the indigenous struggle is far from over.

One afternoon, as they drink beer on Liz's porch, she, her husband and María Clara ask Andrés about the 2000 indigenous uprising against President Jamil Mahuad's dollarization of the economy. Clearly with this scene Arcos Cabrera wishes to stress the importance of this one historical event. Indeed, the event was yet another repetition of past Amerindian uprisings, much like the one that Andrés Chiliquinga leads at the end of Icaza's *Huasipungo*. Such uprisings were the result of the colonial structures that have been perpetuated in Latin America's social, economic, and political structures. As discussed in the previous chapter, the trauma of Conquest and Colonization was a result of mass genocide and enslavement, and the Amerindian's sub-human categorization by the West displaced Amerindians to the margins, where they continue to resist even today. Although CONAIE is in fact Ecuador's largest indigenous organization that has made some progress in indigenous rights, the contemporary Ecuadorian Amerindian remains

very much the Other, both inside and out. Andrés compares himself constantly to both the “white man”—the foreigner—and the *mishu*, thus demonstrating that the cultural divide remains prominent. Furthermore, the fact that he must use traditional Otavaleño clothes while living in New York City constitutes a direct visual representation of his alienated *otherness*. Thus it is not surprising that the ghost of Andrés Chiliquinga—a reminder of indigenous suppression—should “haunt” contemporary Andrés. The ending, therefore, can also be seen as an “exorcism,” in a psychoanalytical sense. As discussed in our examination of the Doña Bárbara myth, were we to follow Freud, latent trauma continues to manifest in the form of neurosis until the subject is able to identify it as trauma and “work through” it. Such manifestations of a colonial trauma appear in the ways that Andrés compares himself constantly to people around him—he, too, views himself as the Other. In a manner similar to Octavio Paz’s *pachuco*, Andrés’ alienation from his heritage displaces him onto a limbo between the West and his indigenous culture. Only when his *tocayo*’s ghost bridges this gap—returns him to his origins—does Andrés remember.

The Andrés Chiliquinga Myth

The recurrence of the Andrés Chiliquinga myth demonstrates the impact that *Huasipungo* had (and still has) on collective memory. Ecuador’s political climate was a strong motivation for each version of the myth as the nation had/s, like Venezuela, what can only be described as an imperfectly modern society—a simulation of modernity that continues to spawn social conflict. One way that artists dealt with these problems was through mythic creation, whether constructing, destructing, or creating them. The Andrés Chiliquinga myth was intended in Icaza’s first version to criticize the *huasipungo* system

and present authentically Ecuadorian reality. It is simply one of many stories that bring attention to the exploitation of Amerindians. And yet, only Andrés Chilibringa's myth continues to be retold inside Ecuador, thus leading to the question: why was it that this *indigenista* protagonist in particular, and not others, becomes a national symbol in Ecuador, such as Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, and Hatuey had been in Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba?

Icaza's gritty, detailed depiction of life on the *huasipungos* without a doubt had a strong impact on the (inter)national audience. The novel takes place in a familiar world, yet there are elements of this world that are different—perhaps exotic (a critique of Icaza's writing mentioned earlier). *Latifundista* and *mestizo* cruelty, the Church's blatant hypocrisy, and the Amerindian's overwhelming suffering were all issues that the typical urban reader—urban educated white or *mestizo*—would not have been accustomed to nor could believe were plaguing his or her own country. Myths and legends are, in fact, uncanny narratives of simultaneous familiarity and unfamiliarity that forge barriers between reader and text. Andrés Chilibringa's rebellion against a world of overwhelming pain evidently struck a chord within Ecuadorian readers, thereby turning him into a symbol of indigenous justice. As such, *Huasipungo* offered the backbone for which future artists could use his myth for contemporary audiences. In fact, both Descalzi's and Guayasamín's versions appeared during periods of political transition and instability. The military juntas in charge of the coups in 1963 and 1972 promised great changes for the small country, especially in the agricultural sector, and vowed to extend rights to the indigenous class. Three decades later, Arcos Cabrera's, too, was created during a period

of transition and instability, with the election of Socialist²¹⁵ president Rafael Correa in 2007. While the versions examined here differ in their approach, we will again examine this myth in its totality in order to identify its basic structure and core symbols.

Myth of Justice and Memory

While each version of the myth presents the Andrés Chiliquinga narrative from varying perspectives, we can identify several common mythemes: 1) Andrés Chiliquinga and his family are exploited while working under Alfonso Pereira's, 2) Andrés steals a bull carcass in order to feed his family, 3) Cunshi, his partner, dies after eating the rancid meat, 4) Andrés cannot afford to buy Cunshi a proper Christian burial, thus jeopardizing her path to Heaven; he steals one of Pereira's cows to pay for it, 5) Pereira beats Andrés publicly for stealing the cow, and 6) Andrés must reconcile to his new reality. While these mythemes are present in all versions, some vary. In each, Andrés reacts initially to differing, yet difficult, predicaments: in Icaza's novel, Pereira's road project exploits the Amerindians and takes over their *huasipungos*; in Descalzi's play, the Americans do the taking; in Guayasamín's film, Andrés cannot afford to pay for Cunshi's Christian burial; in Arcos Cabrera's novel, Chiliquinga's ghost recounts his exploitation to his avatar in order to confront finally his subalterneity. A second mytheme that is interpreted differently is how Andrés' decision sets him off from his subaltern position, if only briefly: Icaza's and Descalzi's Andrés Chiliquingas lead rebellions against Pereira and the Americans; Guayasamín's steals Pereira's cow; and Arcos Cabrera's contemporary counterpart breaks free from a subaltern position by finding his own voice. While each version also approaches the final mytheme differently, the direness of Andrés' situation in each version drives his final actions, violent or other. Finally, Andrés' decision leads to

²¹⁵ Correa's political affiliation is with the socialist party Alianza PAIS (Patria, Altiva y Soberana).

different outcomes, yet they involve either his suffering or death: Icaza's and Descalzi's Andrés Chiliquingas are killed in the rebellion; and Guayasamín's, of course, suffers alongside his son after being beaten. As a postcolonial haunting, Arcos Cabrera's dies, yet returns as a ghost to aid contemporary Andrés in remembering. In this version, and in stark contrast to the others, the new Andrés—much like Daniel in *También la lluvia*—then goes on to succeed where the myth failed.

Despite *Huasipungo*'s popularity throughout Latin America, Andrés Chiliquinga is, definitely, a national myth of Ecuador. Not only does his symbol evoke colonial structures that defined Ecuador's postcolonial economy—the *huasipungos*—, but Andrés Chiliquinga's presence in more recent years signals the impact, both positive and negative, of this myth upon contemporary audiences. As was done in the examination of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, and Hatuey myths, breaking down these mythemes further reveals two key sub-mythemes that underscore the myth's core connotations: justice and memory. First, Andrés Chiliquinga's is a myth of justice that re-evaluates racial foundations in order to ensure the nation's future at moments of crisis and decision. Each political transition promised change for the Amerindian's position, with no concrete result. Each version's particular circumstance, though important elements of myth, becomes secondary structures to its moral core. In calling upon the myth, then, each author and director emitted a common universal moral: man must fight against injustice. This leads to memory, the second sub-mytheme. For a community to exist, its past must not be forgotten. Andrés Chiliquinga has been turned into, therefore, a type of *lieu de mémoire*, a site of memory as Pierre Nora describes it. In Arcos Cabrera's contemporary version, Andrés becomes a culture hero. His testimony, and subsequently those of his

Amerindian ancestors, becomes integrated into the archive, a fact made evident by the novel's inclusion in the Ecuadorian high school curriculum. Icaza's original concern for preserving indigenous culture is projected in each version; the task of historical memory is, therefore, left to the present generation, as shown at the end of Arcos Cabrera's novel. Andrés Chiliquinga's story is essentially "passed down"—an allusion to indigenous oral tradition—and the importance of memory is imbedded within the myth.

While Andrés Chiliquinga is definitely a myth of justice and memory, one cannot evaluate these sub-mythemes without taking into account the subaltern. As an original symbol of Ecuador's *indigenista* movement, the myth's recurrence, beginning with Icaza's 1934 novel, was the result of the Amerindian population's continued subaltern position since colonial times within Ecuadorian society. As such, the subaltern becomes the foundation of this particular myth of justice and memory, as each version both reacts to Ecuador's sociopolitical environment and examines the myth through the lens of the Amerindian, who, in Carlos Arcos Cabrera's contemporary version, breaks free from his position. For this reason, it is helpful to examine the function of the subaltern as a base of this myth of justice and memory in order to fully understand its impact, both positive and negative, on the Amerindian.

The Postcolonial Amerindian Subaltern

In Icaza's version of the myth, Alfonso Pereira's hypocritical life constitutes a metaphor for the ruling elite's nation-building projects. The road between Quito and Cuchitambo represents Ecuador's move towards modernity, even if the project's real purpose is to cover up Lolita Pereira's pregnancy—a double taboo among the bourgeois:

conception out of wedlock and a *cholo* for a father.²¹⁶ Once the child is born, Doña Blanca pretends she is the mother, a fact which, coupled with the father's apparent absence, represses evidence of mixed blood to a *mestizo* father—yet another metaphor for a progressive Ecuadorian society in the future. Doña Blanca and Lolita make arrangements, since their problems are now resolved, to return to Quito when summer begins.²¹⁷ And yet, in the process of “restoring the family's honor,” Amerindian women are forced to display their breasts as if they were cattle; a wet-nurse's own child dies of maltreatment; and Cunshi is ripped from her home and raped by Pereira, none of which the Pereira family acknowledges as out of the ordinary. Yet another example of hypocrisy is the article on the road project that runs in a Quito newspaper.²¹⁸ It states the project is funded by foreigners—the “miembros de sociedades colonizadoras”—who wanted to “penetrate” the savage jungle and bring “civilization”: all allusions to the colonial past and the historic civilization/barbarity dichotomy we have discussed in previous chapters.

²¹⁶ Lolita's situation occupies Pereira's thoughts at the outset: “No. Esto no puede quedar así. El poco cuidado de una muchacha, de una niña inocente de diecisiete años, engañada por un sinvergüenza, por un criminal, no debe deshonrarnos a todos. A todos... Yo, un caballero de la alta sociedad... Mi mujer, una matrona de las iglesias... Mi apellido...” (61) and then, “Mi deber de padre. Jamás consentiría que se case con un cholo. Cholo por los cuatro costados del alma y del cuerpo. Además... El desgraciado ha desaparecido. Carajo... De apellido Cumba...” (67).

²¹⁷ “volvía a brillar inmaculado el honor de la familia, despertaba más tierna e inquieta la maternidad de ña Blanquita” (120).

²¹⁸ The article reads: “El porvenir nacional, en cuanto significa un método seguro de acrecentar riquezas hasta ahora inexploradas en las selvas del Oriente y sus regiones subtropicales como la de Tomachi, ha dado un paso definitivo en el progreso. Por lo que sabemos hasta ahora, parece que los miembros de las sociedades colonizadoras buscan, con toda razón, zonas adecuadas para su establecimiento. Zonas con caminos practicables, clima correcto, cercanía o centros poblados, extensión suficiente de tierras explotables, buena calidad de ésta, etc., etc. Si vamos a pretender que los colonizadores, por el hecho de ser extranjeros han de venir y penetrar inmediatamente a la mitad de la selva, desposeída de todo auxilio humano, para realizar milagros, persistiremos en un grave daño. Hay que dar a la expansión del capital extranjero todas las comodidades que él requiere — en sus colonias económicas —. Así lo exige la inversión de la plusvalía en la acumulación capitalista de las naciones patronas. En el caso actual, ya podrán tener ancho panorama de acción todos los hombres civilizados. Alguien afirmaba que el caso de las sociedades colonizadoras y la acción patriótica de don Alfonso Pereira se puede comparar al comercio de opio en China. Vil calumnia, afirmamos nosotros. Nosotros, que siempre hemos estado por la justicia, por la democracia, por la libertad” (176-7).

And yet, the same article fails to mention that many Amerindians will die in this so-called “civilized” process. The article ends with an ironic statement which Icaza uses in order to poke holes in this false image of progress: “Alguien afirmaba que el caso de las sociedades colonizadoras y la acción patriótica de don Alfonso Pereira se puede comparar al comercio de opio en China. Vil calumnia, afirmamos nosotros. Nosotros, que siempre hemos estado por la justicia, por la democracia, por la libertad” (177). Icaza places this passage strategically towards the end, once the reader has gone through a multitude of scenes where Amerindians are beaten, raped, starved, and exploited. That is, upon encountering the article the reader realizes that “justice,” “democracy” and “liberty” have become relative terms in so-called modern Ecuadorian society. Furthermore, the supposed “civilized” Americans and white Creole élites are, in fact, quite barbaric, thus breaking down the established binary oppositions. Much as in the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, it also reveals the Amerindian’s subaltern position within this corrupt society that has implemented such a Eurocentric civilization/barbarity dichotomy. In other words, the indigenous population’s “barbaric” characterization is, in reality, a reflection of those who have constructed it: the white élites. As subalterns, however, Amerindians do not control this identity, perhaps explaining why we see Arcos Cabrera’s contemporary Andrés accept many of these inherited stereotypes, only to realize later that they are Eurocentric constructions thrust upon, and then absorbed, by the indigenous population: “Idos, uno más, uno menos, nos dejaban palabras sobre nosotros mismos, y de repente esas palabras de a poco se iban haciendo parte de nosotros” (133).

Icaza’s text, thus, laid down the foundation for future interpretations of the Andrés Chilibinga myth, and Descalzi’s, Guayasamín’s, and Arcos Cabrera’s versions

critique the same issues related to the subaltern Amerindian in their contemporary contexts. Both Descalzi's and Guayasamín's works were created during periods of political transition and instability. The military juntas in charge of the coups in 1963 and 1972 promised great changes for the small country, especially in the agricultural sector, and vowed to extend rights to the indigenous class. And yet, little change occurred. Three decades later, Arcos Cabrera's novel, too, was created during a period of transition and instability, with the 2007 election of President Correa, who was also criticized for making unfulfilled promises to the indigenous population. Indeed, prolonged corruption in Ecuadorian society had historically marginalized the Amerindian and this issue was deemed important. And yet, how exactly did Andrés Chiliblinga's symbol, as opposed to those of other *indigenista* figures, such as Fernando Chaves' (1902-99) Manuela²¹⁹ or the Amerindians in Jorge Fernández' (1912-79) *Agua* (1936), become a national myth?

Huasipungo's popularity and subsequent inclusion in the Latin American canon deemed this text a foundational fiction and Andrés Chiliblinga a national myth of justice and memory. As such, his story became a metaphor for the social and political corruption that had plagued Ecuador since colonial times. By employing a myth that was already engraved onto the Ecuadorian political subconscious, Descalzi, Guayasamín, and Arcos Cabrera were able to tap into national collective memory and thus apply the Andrés Chiliblinga myth to a contemporary context. Icaza's version critiqued the "three pillars" of society—the white Creole elite, the Church, and the *cholo*—who were proponents of the corrupt *gamonal* system. In Descalzi's version, the problem was no longer within—*gamonalismo* had long been abolished—but without (U.S. imperialism). Guayasamín returns the critical focus upon national memory of historic corruption by the "three

²¹⁹ Protagonist of Chaves' *Plata y bronce* (1927).

pillars” of society, particularly the Church’s exploitation of Amerindians, and even suggests that the latter would, perhaps, be forever displaced to a subaltern space. Arcos Cabrera, too, focuses upon the national level and inserts a postcolonial critique of the myth. The contemporary Andrés faces the memory of Ecuador’s colonial past in order to recognize the Amerindian’s historic subaltern position and the social structures that perpetuate it. As a young Amerindian, Andrés is in the unique position of altering the cycle of subalterneity that the myth ensures by standing up to this inherited marginalization and finding justice for Amerindians who have historically been “spoken for.”

While *Huasipungo* became popular among the literate *mestizo* and white elite population, Descalzi’s and Guayasamín’s versions were themselves able to disseminate this myth to a larger audience, literate or not. Indeed, one of the critiques that have been traditionally waged against all *indigenista* authors is that their writings were intended for intellectual elites rather than for the often illiterate indigenous communities. By presenting the myth in an audiovisual form, Descalzi was able to remove the illiteracy barrier, and the myth had the potential to reach the Amerindian population. As Richard Schechner has noted: “Performance originates in impulses to make things happen and to entertain;...to bring into a special place a transcendent Other who exists then-and-now and later-and-now;...to focus on a select group sharing a secret language and to broadcast to the largest possible audience of strangers;...” (156-7). Descalzi’s play was further published in 1981, thus opening up new possibilities for production. A quick search on the Internet reveals the numerous productions in Ecuador, particularly from students, based on Descalzi’s play. Yet quite apart from a wider dissemination, a play translates the

individual experience into a collective one. Schechner states further: “[t]he move from theater to ritual happens when the audience is transformed from a collection of separate individuals into a group or congregation of participants” (157). The event, therefore, becomes a collective experience where individuals consciously come together to participate in dramatic action.²²⁰ The experience of witnessing a shared cultural heritage could have also attributed to solidifying this national myth. Guayasamín opened up access even further by converting it into a film, yet another shared experience. His production begins *in medias res*, offering no background information to its audience, a feat impossible had he chosen a lesser-known myth. Finally, Arcos Cabrera has a specific audience—Ecuadorian youth—thus explaining why a “student guide” accompanies the novel. By targeting a younger generation, Arcos Cabrera is able to spread the myth among future generations that eventually will take charge of Ecuadorian society, perhaps ending the marginalization of Amerindians.

While each version showcases the subaltern as the backbone of the myth, one cannot overlook its similarities to the “noble savage” that we saw present in the Anacaona and Hatuey myths. This leads to an important question: what is Andrés’ (the subaltern’s) actual function in the myth? To answer, it would help perhaps to return to one of the critiques that has been made of Icaza’s work: his use of the Amerindian as an excuse for the *mestizo* cause. As discussed in Chapter Three, the Spanish conquest dehumanized, or sub-humanized, Amerindians. The Andrés Chilibinga myth demonstrates the perpetuation of this sentiment in postcolonial times in the scene where Andrés approaches the priest about giving Cunshi a Christian burial. The priest explains

²²⁰ As Schechner states, “The move from theater to ritual happens when the audience is transformed from a collection of separate individuals into a group or congregation of participants” (157).

that the further away the body is buried from the church, the longer it will take the soul to reach Heaven, thus making the burial plot a question of money. That is, Heaven becomes the metaphor for a progressive state—the ruling *élite*'s plan for Ecuador—and the Amerindian's subaltern position makes it impossible to reach. Thus, the myth identifies clearly Amerindian subalterneity as a negative aspect of Ecuadorian society. And yet, does it offer any solutions? Or does the myth merely use the Amerindian's position to promote an ulterior cause?

Beginning with Icaza, Andrés became an *indigenista* symbol of the *mestizo*'s desire for upward social mobility. While the symbol did prove powerful among readers, it did not actually advance any changes that benefitted the indigenous population, hence the reason why *indigenismo* was largely criticized as a strictly *mestizo* movement that excluded Amerindians. Descalzi's and Guayasamín's versions recalled Andrés' symbol in order to draw attention to corrupt politics, yet neither one pursued an agenda in quest of institutional changes that would improve the lives of Amerindians. Similarly, Arcos Cabrera's novel, published amidst President Correa's political reforms, seeks to critique the myth's representation of the Amerindian, yet did not promote political change to benefit the same population. Thus, much as we saw in the case of the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, Andrés does not represent solely the indigenous population; rather, he becomes an avatar for varying social and political causes: Icaza used him in order to promote the *mestizo* cause; Descalzi to criticize U.S. imperialism; Guayasamín to bring attention to Church corruption; and Arcos Cabrera, again, on behalf of the *mestizo* cause. And as in the case of Anacaona and Hatuey, Andrés' point-of-view is rendered artificial, and worse, could never be contested: Amerindians occupied a subaltern position that

prevented them from speaking against any Eurocentric construct. Thus, for the same reasons that the “noble savage” functioned in the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, the Amerindians’ subaltern position becomes essential to the Andrés Chilibuina myth. Given that the versions of the Andrés Chilibuina myth direct so little attention towards the actual indigenous population, the symbol becomes a universal one of justice, explaining perhaps why the myth in fact has reached a degree of popularity outside of Ecuador. Andrés rebelled against exploitation, a theme found across temporal and geographical spaces. Nevertheless, all versions of the myth are in fact national productions, which signals its specific importance to Ecuador’s unique cultural heritage. As a foundational myth, Andrés also becomes a symbol of memory: his story reminds Ecuadorians of the nation’s corrupt past under the tragic *huasipungo* system and brings attention to contemporary manifestations of this legacy. And yet, the myth’s function in Ecuadorian society seemingly omits its focus: the actual Amerindian.

Given the relative absence of the Amerindian in Andrés’ symbol, the myth raises yet another important question: what impact did/does this myth have on the actual indigenous population? The versions examined here reveal that Andrés Chilibuina, in fact, became a mythic symbol of justice in Ecuadorian collective memory, yet had little impact on the Amerindian’s reality. As a result of their subaltern position, Amerindians, since colonial times, have been continuously *spoken for*. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has noted, an important aspect of postcolonial discourse is the subaltern’s stripped perspective. While the authors and director discussed in this chapter may have intended to “uncover” the indigenous voice—to build a platform for them to be heard—it is an artful, if not artificial creation, a stand-in for the real thing. The seemingly absent

Amerindian voice is of course evident in each version: Icaza's and Descalzi's attempt to "recover" the Amerindian voice by mimicking their speech syntactically; Guayasamín's forsakes the Amerindian voice by creating a silent film; and Arcos Cabrera's shows that the Amerindian voice can only be found after death. Finally, although Arcos Cabrera's contemporary Andrés tackles such postcolonial issues related to the subaltern, the entire version becomes ironic because, simply put, Arcos Cabrera is not in fact an Amerindian.

It should be noted, however, that all of these depictions were in no way ironic renderings. That is to say, the authors and director generally did seek to (re)create an authentic indigenous rendering. Indeed, the fact that they all attempted to reconcile the subaltern's position indicates their desire to reconcile with all those who occupy a marginal space within Ecuador. And yet, while each version seeks to make the myth more accessible by broadening its audience—albeit through theater, film, or juvenile audiences—, Andrés' symbol is an inevitable artificiality. To better our point: he remains a symbol of justice and memory to Ecuadorian audiences, but he does not, in fact, represent the actual indigenous community, thus recalling Mariátegui's mention that a true version of the indigenous situation could only emerge from within the Amerindian population.²²¹ The myth has had, in reality, no effect on the Amerindians' actual subaltern position other than reminding Ecuadorians perhaps that the indigenous population remains marginal. This leads us to another important question: in exposing Amerindian exploitation and attempting to reconcile the indigenous perspective from an

²²¹ "La literatura indigenista no puede darnos una versión rigurosamente verista del indio. Tiene que idealizarlo y estilizarlo. Tampoco puede darnos su propia ánima. Es todavía una literatura de mestizos. Por eso se llama indigenista y no indígena. Una literatura indígena, si debe venir, vendrá a su tiempo. Cuando los propios indios estén en grado de producirla." (275).

outsider's view, has the myth, in actuality, perpetuated the Amerindian's subaltern position?

To answer this question, it is perhaps helpful to re-examine one aspect of the myth that has been heavily critiqued: the Amerindian's "barbaric," animal-like nature. Perhaps the most representative (and shocking) scene in Icaza's novel is when Andrés beats Cunshi before having sex.²²² The rape scene disgusts, in fact, the contemporary Andrés carácter in Arcos Cabrera's novel, when he exclaims: "...que mi tocayo llegue y le maltrate a la Cunshi para después tener sexo creo que es exageración por parte del Icaza. Él no se interioriza en los sentimientos de mi tocayo, el Andrés Chiliquinga. No puede ver su corazón. Lo único que le queda es convertirle en un animal, peor todavía, porque él y la Cunshi son menos que animalitos" (71).

One cannot help but question why Icaza presents the Amerindian—and Andrés in particular—in this manner, particularly if the intention of the myth is to draw attention to an exploited group. On the one hand, the Amerindian must be presented as sub-human in order to emphasize his subaltern position. One could even argue that his beating Cunshi only emphasizes the fact that his oppression under Pereira has been so extreme that he must take out his aggression on the ones closest to him. On the other hand, however, neither Andrés nor any other Amerindian in the myth has what could be called a "redeeming moment" when the audience recognizes the indigenous population as anything other than sub-human. As such, even a sympathizing audience perceives Amerindians as somehow inferior, perhaps even barbaric, as heightened further in Icaza's, Descalzi's, and Guayasamín's versions: while the first two create a linguistic

²²² This scene is also in Descalzi's and Arcos Cabrera's versions. Although it is omitted from Guayasamín's short film, he makes a visual connection between Andrés and a slaughtered animal when Pereira hangs him by an iron hook for a public flogging.

barrier that prevents the Amerindian from forming full, comprehensive thoughts, the latter eliminates indigenous speech altogether. Arcos Cabrera's version remains an outlier: while the contemporary Andrés summarizes the myth, he also critiques this precise so-called "barbaric" characterization. It is little surprise then that upon the *tocayo*'s visit, the ghost should speak intelligently in his native tongue, thus removing the linguistic barrier of Icaza's and Descalzi's versions.²²³ And yet, because Arcos Cabrera is *mestizo*, this particular reaction—as in the barbaric characterization—ends up imposing itself as we see the contemporary Amerindian confront the indigenous stereotype created by Icaza and perpetuated by later versions. We must recall, however, that this is merely a *mestizo*—outsider—construction of the Amerindian's internal world. Contemporary Andrés reflects on this paradox:

Descubrí en mi corazón que el libro del Icaza y la historia que contaba de mi *tocayo* me habían agarrado. No era sólo su historia, era la de los míos, historias que había escuchado de los mayores de la comunidad y de mi familia, de la boca de mi mismo taita, sobre lo que pasaba en las haciendas...Sí, la historia de mi *tocayo* me había atrapado y me molestaba que me llegara a través de la palabra de un *mishu*. (81)

As a result, the fictionalization of the contemporary Amerindian's critique of the myth only enhances the indigenous subaltern position. In this sense, the novel fails ultimately to bring about any new twist on the Amerindian's position; rather, it perpetuates the myth further and reminds audiences that the indigenous population continues to be spoken for.

²²³ "¡Buenos días, *tocayo*! —me dijo en *runashimi*" (91).

Given that the myth, paradoxically, calls attention to Amerindian exploitation all the while perpetuating indigenous subalterneity, this leads to yet another question: what does the myth project about future Ecuadorian generations? As a myth of indigenous justice, and memory of Ecuador's corrupt historical past, does the myth also comment on Ecuador's future? Closer examination of the children characters in the myth could help to ponder the question.

Art often uses children to symbolize the future, and in fact two important children do appear in the Andrés Chilibinga myth: Lola Pereira's bastard son, and Andrés and Cunshi's son. To begin with, Alfonso Pereira accepts his uncle's project because his daughter becomes pregnant out of wedlock, with a *mestizo* no less. Once the child is born, Doña Blanca pretends that she herself is the mother and, presumably, will raise the child as if he were a *criollo*. The child will never know who his real father is, thus eliminating the possibility that he function as a potential bridge between the *criollo* and *mestizo* populations. As such, the child's future becomes a metaphor for future Ecuadorian *criollo* and *mestizo* generations. Not only will these two groups remain separated, but the *criollo* will maintain a superior position vis-à-vis the *mestizo*. Furthermore, to deny *mestizaje* also means rejecting indigenous heritage, as the *criollo* favored a connection to white Spain over the non-white locals. Had the Pereiras accepted their grandson's mixed blood, the myth would have signaled a future reconciliation between *criollos*, *mestizos*, and, perhaps, *indios*. The second child—Andrés and Cunshi's son—suggests more about the myth's projection. Andrés and Cunshi are not married, but their son legitimizes their union. The child's primary narrative function is so that Cunshi can become the Pereira boy's wet nurse. But aside from being a useful narrative device,

Andrés and Cunshi's son also projects the Amerindian future. Upon Cunshi's death, their son witnesses Andrés mourn her death, be publicly beaten, and then arm the revolt against Pereira. Since the myth does not indicate otherwise, it can be assumed that the child witnesses the revolt and perishes in the fire, thus suggesting the Amerindian's future peril.²²⁴ But the fact that the Pereira boy survives and Andrés' son perishes indicates further the myth's dark outlook towards the Amerindian's ability to overcome marginality in the future under white élites.

One final element in the myth that contemplates the Amerindian subaltern's future is the road project, which first appears in Icaza's novel. Much as Santos Luzardo's plan to build a road between Altamira and Caracas in *Doña Bárbara*, the road between Cuchitambo and Quito represents a means of reconciling the civilization/barbarity dichotomy. Quito is the center of reason and progress. Thus, a road between the capital and Cuchitambo will not only facilitate economic progress, but will bring urban civilization to a barbaric rural region. Much as in *Facundo's pampa* or *Doña Bárbara's llano*, this region's inhabitants display a "corruption" that counteracts the nation's progressive move towards modernity. As opposed to a positivist approach to this dichotomy, however, which maintains that civilization must rein barbarity in, the Andrés Chiliquinga myth, much like *Doña Bárbara's*, *Anacaona's*, and *Hatuey's*, destroys this dichotomy by breaking down the binary opposition. Andrés' barbarity is a direct result of the "three pillars" corruption, and yet, Andrés and the other Amerindians are not, in fact, "noble savages." Rather, their animalistic representation in the myth would have characterized them more as "fierce savages," *calibanes* in Fernández Retamar's term. As

²²⁴ While Guayasamin's version does not show the revolt, it emphasizes future indigenous suffering. In the film's final scene, Andrés embraces his son, who appears as a young boy instead of a toddler, and the two are wrought with anguish.

this author maintains, Latin America's future lies not in being Ariel, but Caliban—a so-called “fierce savage” who struggles against the (former) colonizer, forces that have continued to marginalize the Amerindian population in Ecuador and elsewhere. While Icaza, Descalzi, and Guayasamín project a pessimistic outlook on this subject—the endless cycle of corruption—Arcos Cabrera, much like Icíar Bollaín and even Telemundo's *Doña Bárbara*, reacts to the myth's unsatisfying ending.

Conclusion

The longevity of the Andrés Chilibuenga myth demonstrates its impact on Ecuador's national collective memory. A definite evolution can be traced from Icaza's 1934 novel to Arcos Cabrera's 2013 work. Icaza's Andrés symbolized the struggle against the *huasipungo* system and the “three pillars” that had corrupted Ecuadorian society since colonial times; Descalzi's emphasized the reaction against outside forces that enhanced Amerindian suppression; Guayasamín's was left to suffer in silence; Arcos Cabrera's reminded future generations that the suffering he endured recurs throughout Ecuador. And yet, the ending of Arcos Cabrera's novel also signals a new ending to the myth, perhaps with the hope that the Amerindian will one day overcome marginality.

While the popularity of Icaza's *Huasipungo* spread the myth outside Ecuador, it has been recreated solely by Ecuadorian artists. Indeed, the release of Arcos Cabrera's novel created much excitement within the country and drew focus upon the subaltern debate within Ecuadorian society. And yet, despite its popularity, this myth has not been converted into a commodified product, as we saw in the examination of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, and Hatuey myths. Indeed, there are no statues or sculptures of Andrés Chilibuenga, nor marketable products portraying his name or face. And yet, his

symbol is kept alive through younger generations who now have two versions of the Amerindian's narrative, thus providing the opportunity to reflect on the evolution of this myth and its relevance to the current social and political climate in Ecuador.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

This dissertation has chosen a mythic approach to the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths in an effort to widen their interpretive possibilities. Upon examining them together, it is clear that these myths all have distinct core connotations in their respective contexts. In the Doña Bárbara myth, for example, several characters suffer from the psychological effects of trauma. While Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga all experience trauma in their respective myths, there is no hero's journey and, therefore, this trauma is never overcome. In another example, several versions of the Doña Bárbara and Anacaona myths were created by females. As a result, a feminine perspective has been applied to these myths and not to the Hatuey and Andrés Chilibiquinga ones. These perspectives, however, are not identical. While Ureña's and Danticat's versions are feminine, they are not a feminist. Kaplan's and Telemundo's versions, however, are feminist as displayed by the shift in perception of the *femme fatale* figure. In these more contemporary versions, Doña Bárbara takes control of her sexuality and competes at the same level as the men in the myth. The Anacaona and Hatuey myths are unique because they are both myths of martyrs and their connotation contains an overtly religious tone. By the same token, Andrés Chilibiquinga is the only *indigenista* myth and, therefore, broaches the subject of the postcolonial subaltern.

And yet, examining these myths together also reveals several similarities. To begin with, the underlying civilization/barbarity dichotomy becomes the base of each myth. As discussed in the Introduction and reinforced throughout, this has been a historic debate in Latin America. Given the symbiotic relationship between myth and culture, it is

hardly a surprise, then, that a theme so integral to Latin American heritage becomes a core connotation of its myths. While each myth presents this common sub-mytheme from a different angle, they all contest the established Eurocentric dichotomy: in the Doña Bárbara myth, “barbarity” has infiltrated the supposedly “civilized” political realm; in the Anacaona and Hatuey myths, the “civilized” Europeans, not Amerindians, are the real barbarians; and in the Andrés Chilibiquing myth, the Amerindian’s “barbarity” is overshadowed by the “civilized” white élites’ and Americans’ own barbaric actions.

A second connotation shared by three of the four myths is their anti- or postcolonial sentiments. Largely based in the civilization/barbarity debate, the Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquing myths also project this sub-mytheme in a different manner. Beginning with Anacaona and Hatuey, these myths tear down the established colonial civilization/barbarity dichotomy, and in exposing its fallacy, project postcolonial sentiments. This becomes the backbone of the myths as it contests Eurocentric colonial portrayals of Amerindian identity. The Andrés Chilibiquing myth confronts postcolonial issues head on by exposing social structures that continued to marginalize Amerindians. These common sub-mythemes, therefore, underscore the core connotations of a larger Latin American culture/community. This is, perhaps, why we are beginning to see more contemporary versions convert these once-national myths into international ones.

The Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquing myths were chosen for this study precisely because of the recent contemporary works discussed. Indeed, the re-emergence of well-known (post)colonial narratives sparked interest in taking a mythic approach to them. This, however, does not suggest that the interpretive framework employed here cannot be applied to other narratives. Nor does it suggest that

this phenomenon exists exclusively in Latin America. However, because this dissertation focuses solely upon this region, it concludes with a speculation on to how approaching myth through this framework could deepen our understanding of Latin American culture. In addition, this conclusion reflects on the present study and projects how we can deepen our interpretation of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths.

While this dissertation chose the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths because of their popularity, there are other myths that could be approached using this same model. Peruvian artists and intellectuals, for example, continue to call upon Rosendo Maqui, the Amerindian protagonist of Ciro Alegría's *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* (1945) (considered the regionalist novel *par excellence* in Peru). The narrative focuses upon the Rumi community in the Peruvian highlands and centers upon the conflict between Maqui, the Amerindian community leader, and Don Álvaro Amenábar, the large Creole landowner. The conflict revolves around a land dispute filed by Don Álvaro, who believes that he is the rightful owner of the land that the Rumi community sits upon. As Maqui attempts to contest this accusation through legal documentation, the corrupt legal system grants the land to Don Álvaro, and the community is forced to move to the non-fertile, mountainous region. Themes similar to those we see in this dissertation soon emerge: barbarity has corrupted the legal system, thus questioning the historic civilization/barbarity debate we see in the Doña Bárbara myth; similar to Anacaona and Hatuey, Maqui fights against foreign invasion and is murdered for his insurrection; and finally, the Amerindian subaltern attempts to break free from his position, only to fail, much like we see in the Andrés Chilibiquinga myth.

Alegría's novel received (inter)national acclaim and Peruvian illustrator Gonzalo Mayo recalled Maqui's story in the 1963-5 comic that ran in the Sunday supplement "Estampa de Expreso" of the national periodical *Expreso de Lima*. Two decades after the comic's final run, Maqui was once again incited from within Peruvian collective memory, this time by President Alan García. Incidentally, he was the only member of the Aprista Party—Alegría's political affiliation—to have served as president. During his first presidency from 1985-90, he held a 1987 contest to erect a statue of Rosendo Maqui in Lima's *Parque de la Muralla*, an honor reserved exclusively for former military figures. Humberto Hoyos, a local sculptor, won the contest. His sculpture shows a prolific Maqui staring off into the distance and is reminiscent of the first scene of the novel, in which Maqui is perched on a rock high above the Rumi community. The sculpture's face, however, appears worn down from years of exposure to the elements and his eyes are full of worry, or perhaps sadness, as if longing for his community. Indeed, the sculpture strikes emotion in its viewer as it is a constant reminder of the indigenous struggle. Incidentally, President García faced political opposition during the monument's erection, and the project was not completed until during his second 2006 to 2011 presidency.

Although no further literary or film versions of Maqui exist to date, current President Ollanta Humala, member of the Communist Party of Peru, has cited Maqui on several occasions. It can be assumed, therefore, that Maqui's myth contains certain core connotations engrained in Peruvian culture. Furthermore, the fact that Peruvians continue to recall his symbol becomes evidence that he is also engrained in collective memory. Thus, employing the framework used to interpret the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey,

and Andrés Chilibringa myths could lead to a deeper understanding of its cultural importance within Peruvian society.

But the Rosendo Maqui myth is just one of many that could be interpreted using this framework. As we saw in the case of Anacaona and Hatuey, one interesting trend in the past decades has been a focus upon Spanish and Amerindian colonial figures. In Mexico, La Malinche, Hernán Cortés, and Moctezuma, all important colonial figures in the fall of Tenochtitlán, have been the subject of numerous works: most notably, in Octavio Paz's *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950;1959), and in more recent ones, such as in Laura Esquivel's novel *Malinche* (2006). In the Andean region, Incan emperor Atahualpa, and *conquistadors* Francisco Pizarro and Lope de Aguirre have been reinterpreted in several works: Atahualpa, for example, in Benjamín Carrión's *Atahualpa* (1939), Neptalí Zúñiga's *Atahualpa, o, La tragedia de Ameríndia* (1945), and Paulo de Carvalho Neto's *Mi tío Atahualpa* (1972); Pizarro in Isabel Allende's *Inés del alma mía* (2006), and the Venezuelan vampire *telenovela* *Gabriel* (2008); and Aguirre in Ramón J. Sender's *La aventura equinocial de Lope de Aguirre* (1968), Omero Antonutti's *El Dorado* (1988), and Abel Posse's *Daimon* (1978). Cristóbal Colón is perhaps the most reimagined Spanish colonial figure, and providing a list of these works would be a daunting task. It cannot go unnoticed, however, that that these narratives remain relevant more than 500 years after the discovery of the New World and, therefore, could be interpreted as myth. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, an analysis of this type could identify the core connotations of these narratives, thereby deepening our understanding of their link to community and culture.

While this framework could aid the examination of individual narratives, it could also inform interpretations of works that take a broader approach to myth. Pre-*Boom* authors such as Alejo Carpentier, Miguel Ángel Asturias, and Juan Rulfo, along with *Boom* novelists such as Gabriel García Márquez, all acknowledged Latin America's unique history and cultural heritage and examined these nations through myth. Much as the artists in this dissertation sought to conserve indigenous heritage through myth, pre-*Boom* and *Boom* authors reinterpreted the clash and then subsequent syncretism of European and Latin American cultures. As a result, novels such as Carpentier's *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* (1945), Asturias' *Hombres de maíz* (1949), Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo* (1955), and García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (1967) become a meditation on the symbiotic relationship between myth, community and culture, and a mythic approach to works such as these could result in a broader interpretation.

Pondering the ways in which this framework could facilitate our interpretation of the Latin American myth is an endless task. This leads us, therefore, to a final conclusion that is, in reality, a reflection on this dissertation and a projection of its future. While this study offers a unique take on the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibiquinga myths, future projects could expand upon this interpretation in two key areas. To begin with, one challenge of this dissertation was deciding which versions of each myth to include. As a result, those selected were done so in order to display the evolution of each myth in the most coherent manner. Indeed, including all versions in existence would have been daunting for both its author and reader. As mentioned in the Introduction, little attention has been given to many of the works examined here, and the versions left out are no exception. Therefore, an examination of omitted versions could

both deepen our understanding of these myths and feature non-canonical works. This also applies to versions that have not yet been released, such as Telemundo's forthcoming *Doña Bárbara* production.

Finally, an important element of this dissertation has been identifying where different versions of a myth depart from one other. As we saw in this study, each version takes a unique approach to the myth. One reason this occurs is because the myth passes through a contemporary lens, thus reflecting both the *zeitgeist* and its author's own ideology. We see this, for example, in the Andrés Chilibringa myth. The mytheme of Amerindian marginalization becomes reinterpreted as the culpable party changes: in Icaza's version, it is the white elite; in Descalzi's, the U.S.; in Guayasamín's, the Catholic Church; and in Arcos Cabrera's, Eurocentric constructions of Amerindians perpetuated by novels such as *Huasipungo*. These departures, however, also occur because a version's author has become dissatisfied with a certain aspect of the myth. In the Doña Bárbara myth, for example, Kaplan's and Telemundo's versions attempt to reconcile Doña Bárbara's demise, perhaps because they were unsatisfied with the myth's ending: in Kaplan's version, Doña Bárbara travels to Caracas in order to start a new life; in Telemundo's, she atones for her malevolent actions and ultimately descends into the Underworld. These departures, while reconciliations, also become critiques of the myth. Identifying the moments in which each version departs from the previous one enables us to deepen our understanding of the ways in which artists have critiqued the myth. This aspect, therefore, is one that could also be expanded upon in order to deepen our interpretations of the Doña Bárbara, Anacaona, Hatuey, and Andrés Chilibringa myths. As a result, expanding upon these two areas in the present study, and applying this

interpretive framework to other myths, will only enrich our understanding of the function of myth in Latin America and its fundamental link to community and culture.

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